

Durham Planning Board  
Notes for Planning Board Site Walk  
Tuesday 04 November 2014

Convene 1504  
Adjourn 1624

Planning Board Members  
David Williams, *Secretary*  
Julian Smith, Town Council Rep.  
Lorne Parnell  
Linda Tatarczuch, *Alternate*

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Michael Behrendt, Town Planner  
Mr. Jeff Githens, Peak Development  
Abby [last name unidentified], Lodges Management  
Dianna Carrol  
Barbara Dill  
Beth Olshansky

Location: Peak/The Lodges/Community Center and Grounds, Mast Road/Hwy 155A

Notes for Site Walk:

The Lodges is open and actively used by students, and Mr. Jeff Githens showed the attractive and spacious Community Center facilities available to students, including kitchen, computer room, lounge, hearth, seating, as well as an outside hot tub, fire place etc.

He then led Planning Board members and others to the west edge of development, noting along the way the covered, perpendicular-hung bicycle racks on student housing. The western edge of the Lodges is a 10-12 feet wall dropping down onto the adjacent properties. Participants readily observed how unobstructed is the exposure to 44 ft high student housing and parking from Mast Road/Hwy 155A. As the road/hwy is a valued rural gateway into Durham, Planning Board members and the public asked repeatedly about a comprehensive masking of this distracting exposure. In addition, there was discussion of the necessity to strengthen and preserve the vegetation masking The Loges along Mast Road/Hwy 155A.

Details included multi-layering of trees to include pine, hemlock, and oak as well as substantial use of vines, both below and upon the elevated west-end of the construction site. Attention was drawn to the years required for the trees to mature and in order to serve as an effective mask, protecting the rural view upon entering Durham along Mast Road/Hwy 155A.

In addition to the need for continuing maintenance of the tree-mask below the wall, the placement of masking trees above the wall was also considered. There is about an 8-foot space between the automobile parking and the wall itself. While an automobile guard/railing is required on this space, placement of masking trees should also be considered.

Mr. Githens then led the site walkers to a two-bedroom unit which could accommodate a third person: one bedroom only could be modified for two-persons, perhaps with individual beds elevated above individual desks. Students would volunteer to live in the doubled-up bedroom apartments, and individual student costs would be less than single individual bedroom costs.

Returning to the Community Center, the site walk concluded with additional discussion of the costs for 3-bed units. Abby, from the Lodges Management Staff, said she would provide detailed information to the Planning Board.

Prepared by David Williams  
Planning Board Secretary