



**TOWN OF DURHAM**  
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**Town Planner's Project Review**  
**Wednesday, December 14, 2016**

- X. **Public Hearing - Young Drive Redevelopment.** Design review (preliminary) application for the redevelopment of Young Drive into a senior housing project (55 years of age +). Young Drive, LLC, owner. Francis Chase, agent. Eric Metz, consultant. Dennis Quintal, engineer. Gary Lowe/Ned Adams, Lowe Associates, architect. Jeff Brown, attorney. Map 4, Lots 42-2 through 42-14, Lots 42-16 & 17, Lot 47-0. Coe's Corner Zone.
- I recommend that the Planning Board either continue the design review and public hearing to an upcoming meeting or close the design review, as appropriate.

Please note the following:

**Process**

- 1) **Plans.** No updated plans or documentation have been submitted since the last set that was discussed at the November 9 Planning Board meeting. The applicant informed me that they hope to have revised plans to me this Monday, December 12. If so, I will forward them to the board. Or, the applicant may have new plans on December 14 which would be presented for the first time at the Planning Board meeting. This would allow for minimal if any staff review of the plans prior to presentation to the Planning Board. Note that there is no specific deadline for submission of revised plans for projects that are in the works – because the nature of “revisions” varies significantly - but the later that revisions/new information is submitted the less response the Town is able to provide, potentially extending the timeframe for review of projects. This limitation is made clear to all applicants.
- 2) **Design Review.** Because there are several important outstanding issues, a number of variances would be required, and no new information has been submitted at this point, I recommend that the design review process and public hearing remain open and continue to another meeting. On large projects like Young Drive, it is preferred that there be some loose consensus about the project, if possible, to give the applicant some direction in subsequently applying for variances and preparing a formal site plan application. However, the applicant or Planning Board can close the design review at any time.

- 3) Site walk. A site walk is scheduled for Wednesday, December 14, at 2:30, prior to the Planning Board meeting. The applicant intends to stake the corners of buildings and the proposed road location, but not to send up balloons showing building height.
- 4) Sterling Hill. The applicant is looking to Sterling Hill development in Exeter as a model. It would be worthwhile for individual Planning Board members, or for the board as a whole to visit there.
- 5) Conservation Commission. The applicant had a preliminary meeting with the Conservation Commission on November 10. *An excerpt of the draft minutes is included in the packet.* There will likely be a dredge and fill needed, along with a conditional use and variance for activity within the buffers.
- 6) Conditional Use and Variances. applicant should meet with Audrey Cline and I prior to submitting a variance application so that we can determine which variances would be needed.
- 7) Other information. *\*\*\*Is there other information, studies, or analyses that would be useful for the Planning Board to have when reviewing this project.*

### **Buildings**

- 8) Visibility of buildings. It is desirable to screen/buffer the buildings as much as possible and to retain as much of the existing wooded buffers along Dover Road, Bayview Road, and Beard's Creek. The existing buffers are dense and mature, but most of the trees along Bayview Road are deciduous. There are a number of large evergreen trees along Beard's Creek. I have recommended that the applicant provide simulated views of the development from various vantage points along Dover Road, Bayview Road, and Beard's Creek.
- 9) *\*I strongly recommend that prior to closing the design review application, the Planning Board, community, and neighbors have a very clear sense of how visible the buildings would be from off site, through whatever means are necessary to convey this information.*
- 10) Neighboring property. It would be helpful to have a plan showing the site plan with neighboring lots and buildings so that the board can see how close they are.
- 11) Building D. Building D is the smaller building shown closer to Bayview Road. The applicant proposes that this building be the same height as the other buildings. Given the smaller footprint of Building D and its proximity to Bayview Road, I recommend that it be lower in height than the others.
- 12) Architecture. Architectural review would be involved and an architectural review committee should be created by the board. A key goal would be to break up the mass of the buildings.

### Transportation Issues

- 13) Road. The road into the site is presently a Town road. The applicant wishes to build a new road and retain it as a private road. Mike Lynch, DPW Director, stated that he thinks it better to have a Town road since many residents complain about lack of services in these situations. Mike Lynch, Todd Selig, Mary Ellen Humphrey, and I met to discuss this issue. We agreed that it is appropriate for the applicant to build a private road provided there are clear and prominent notes on the plan and in all deeds explaining that the road is private and no Town services are provided on the road. Approval from the Town Council would likely be needed to abandon the existing Town road.
- 14) Bayview Road. We will need to determine what kind of road/sidewalk connection to Bayview Road is appropriate, if any.
- 15) Pedestrian connection. \*It would be highly beneficial for the applicant to create a pedestrian connection to the downtown. The route along Dover Road is fairly long and not particularly pedestrian friendly. This would require obtaining an easement or land across an intervening lot. I encourage the applicant to speak with some abutters, particularly the owner of Map 4, Lot 40 about possibly obtaining an easement across the lot which would connect to Cowell Drive.
- 16) Parking. There would be garage parking under each building. This would be located underground or slightly bermed/screened with walls so that it is not visible at grade. I strongly recommend that the amount of parking in front of the buildings be significantly reduced as the parking areas as now shown would detract from the character of the project. For elderly housing, the zoning ordinance requires 1 space per dwelling unit plus 1 per employee (The applicant does not expect to have any employees on site). A variance might be needed to have parking in front of the buildings as shown. 175-46 F. 1. in the Coe's Corner section of the ordinance states: "Parking shall be located to the side or rear of buildings."
- 17) Gate. The applicant is receptive to there not being a gate at the entrance to the development from Dover Road (i.e. that it be an open rather than a gated community).
- 18) Street trees. It would be appropriate to plant street trees along both sides of the driveway.
- 19) Traffic study. A traffic study will likely be needed with the formal application.

### Zoning

- 20) Conditional use. *Elderly housing, multiunit* is permitted in the Coe's Corner Zoning District by conditional use.
- 21) Wetland and Shoreland Districts. The project is subject to the Shoreland and Wetland Overlay Districts. There is a 75 foot setback from Beard's Creek in the Shoreland District (unless it is tidal, to be clarified). The wetland buffer is 75 feet (unless Beard's Creek is tidal though I believe that it is not tidal). Streets, sidewalks/paths, and accessory structures

(but not residential structures nor parking areas) are allowed in the Wetland District by conditional use. Streets, sidewalks/paths, *residential buildings*, and accessory structures (but not residential structures nor parking areas) are allowed in the Shoreland District by conditional use.

- 22) Building height. The proposed buildings would be 4 floors of residential over 1 level of parking partially below ground (and bermed/screened so that it is not visible). The maximum building height is 30 feet, and 35 feet at the discretion of the Planning Board. It appears that variances would be needed for height as the buildings would be about 45 feet to the ridge (Height is measured at the midpoint between the eave and ridge).

**Miscellaneous**

- 23) Number of units. The applicant proposes 160 units. They would be all 2 bedroom with possibly a few 1 and 3 bedroom units.
- 24) Condos. The applicant intends to sell the units as condos.
- 25) Utilities. Town water and sewer are available at the site.
- 26) Other issues. *\*Are there any other particular issues that should be discussed?*