

From: [Janice Aviza](#)
To: [Karen Edwards](#)
Cc: rtaintor@durham.nh.us
Subject: Citizen Letter to Planning Board - MILL PLAZA
Date: Sunday, January 24, 2021 2:18:21 PM

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Planning Board,

RE: Mill Plaza Proposal:

As always, thank you for your dedication to the town's business, particularly during Covid restraints.

I implore you to heed the Conservation Commission's setback recommendations which will protect that sensitive area—the Plaza. As I previously wrote to the Conservation Commission:

Quite simply, I ask you to give particular attention to the experiential input of two relevant entities in particular.

Residents of Chelsey Drive: They know the brook; they live beside it. They know its behavior in normal and abnormal weather conditions. They are warning of the deleterious effect of destructive changes to the plaza area.

Plaza Management. They have been demonstrably indifferent, in the past, to the agreements they have made concerning maintenance of the property w/r/t respect and stewardship of the brook and the vegetation at the back of the plaza—to the point of violating these agreements in so many ways. Why should we expect any different in the future? The past is prologue.

The ecological status of this area is fragile as it is. We cannot allow it to be further compromised. Please take the above input by "interested parties" into serious consideration. _

Density: On a recent visit to the plaza, I watched two delivery trucks pull up and stop in front of Rite Aid (. . . in the fire lane, b/t/w/). One was a big box truck, the other was the size of a railroad car. They simultaneously unloaded their products and dolly'd them into the store. This is far, far from unusual. It's a constant. I see this sort of maneuvering very often while at the plaza. Quietly observing this activity reinforced what has been my greatest objection to the Plaza proposal--- It is entirely, entirely TOO DENSE. How in the world will such everyday activity as I witnessed work in a plaza that is proposed to be more than twice as dense as it currently is?

A well-laid out plaza would be welcomed by Durham residents. But putting ten pounds of potatoes into a five-pound bag is not prudent. It's not graceful. It's self-defeating.

Is all that commercial space even viable? There are enough empty commercial spaces in town as it is. Many have been empty for YEARS. Is there a worse look for a town than "For Rent" signs in the windows of commercial spaces??

Particularly since the pandemic, the relevance of office space is devolving. It will probably never fully return. An independent, realistic Fiscal Impact study is imperative.

Traffic at the single In/Out: Serious study must be given to the heavier traffic, both vehicular and pedestrian, that will occur if the plaza is expanded. Dense housing will beget jaywalking. It's already been proven to be a dangerous place for pedestrians.

Thank you for reading my letter.

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Durham