

Required “Traffic Impact” Analyses for Conditional-Use Review of Mill Plaza Proposal

Not Yet Studied as of January 2022:

Likely increase in on-site (& neighborhood) pedestrian & other traffic-mode impact from proposed addition of 258 “beds” to Mill Plaza

Submitted to the Durham Planning Board, January 6, 2022

Drawn from 17+ months of emails, Public Comments, and written submissions to the Durham Planning Board (PB) & to Contract Planner Rick Taintor regarding [Colonial Durham Associates’ \(CDA’s\) Mill Plaza CUP Application](#), and from a brief “Public Comment” PPT presentation to the Durham Town Council on October 18, 2021 / 7:19:12 pm ([video](#)).

(list of sources at end of this document)

Joshua Meyrowitz, 7 Chesley Drive, Durham, NH

Prof.Joshua.Meyrowitz@gmail.com [ZNe]



Current college-student hotspots cluster on Main St, Madbury Rd (& Garrison Ave, beyond top of map)

Madbury Rd →

UNH

Main St

MILL PLAZA

Brookside Commons
55+ condos

Hillside to be removed

Woods-to-parking plan

Faculty Neighborhood
(single-family homes)

Foot/bike paths & bridge connecting & protecting single-family homes to/from commercial & student zones

Aerial view of *EXISTING* 10-acre Mill Plaza site

Student off-campus travel now clusters on Main St, Madbury Rd, & Garrison Ave to Northwest



Oval = Chesley Marsh Wetland area with wooden College Brook Footbridge at the Neighborhood's "Magic Path" (wooded path area with stone walls between Thompson Ln & foot/bike path to Plaza rear)

Unstudied: On-site & near-site foot, bike, skateboard, scooter, motorbike, Uber/Lyft traffic

- June 2018 CDA application accepted: prospective traffic changes **on/within** Mill Plaza site to be studied
- Oct 2020 – CDA guides PB away from *on-site* study because “residents won’t be parking on site”
- Jan 27, 2021 – “public hearing,” PB discusses & votes on scope of traffic studies – with *no public input*
- 2020-2021 – 700+ pp of “Traffic Impact” & hrs of meetings focus on **off-site** impact (e.g. road crosswalks)
- No attention given to how 258 tenants+guests move on/to/from **plaza & neighborhood paths & streets**
- No studies presented of existing UNH student movements in MadCom-to-Main corridor vs. current Plaza
- No look at likely prime neighborhood pickup & drop-off spots (given that tenant cars barred from Plaza)
- Submitted studies claim peak college-student Saturday movement is midday (vs. actual 11:30p -1:30a)
- RSG Consultant says “typical traffic lens” does not even look at unsafe/noisy movement in late hours
- Resident videos shown on April 28, 2021 lead two Board members to question missing pedestrian data
- Contract Planner Rick Taintor: “But that’s not what we asked the traffic study to do.”
- April 28, 2021, 11:12 pm – Planning Board votes to accept the car-centric, off-site-focused traffic studies

BUT: Refusing to study on-site & near-site movement does not mean that it doesn’t exist

Recall: [Town Attorney advised](#) in Sept 2018 that CU Zoning Article provides “**non-exclusive**” list of things Board must consider for compliance. **Impacts not assessable via typical methods must be researched through other means.**

June 2018 Promise

Application Review Studies to include pedestrian traffic

“*on the [Mill Plaza] site, within the site*”

June 13, 2018 was the formal application acceptance day for Mill Plaza Site Plan

“[Planning Board Member] **Mr. Parnell** said a major issue in regard to the traffic analysis was pedestrians, and he spoke about the **importance of doing a study of current and future pedestrian traffic on the site....”**

—June 13, 2018 Planning Board [video](#), 8:30:57 pm & [minutes](#), p. 8 [emphasis added]

January 2022 Reality

There has yet to be a study of increase in **on-site (& neighborhood) pedestrian & other traffic-mode impact from proposed addition of 258 “beds” to Mill Plaza** – despite 2018 promise & months of citizen requests.

CDA Overwhelmed the PB & Public with 707 pages of Car-Centric “Traffic Impact Studies” (TIS) and hours of mind-numbing oral presentation....

Tighe & Bond, [Traffic Study 7-31-20](#) (11 MB), Christopher Granatini, **202 pages**

Tighe & Bond, [Updated Traffic Study 8-20-20](#) (8 MB), Christopher Granatini, **243 pages**

RSG, [Peer Traffic Review 3-19-21](#) (177 KB), Erica Wygonik, **6 pages**

Tighe & Bond, [Applicant Response to Peer Review 4-19-21](#) (150 KB), **5 pages**

Tighe & Bond, [Updated Traffic Study 4-19-21](#) (12 MB), Christopher Granatini, **251 pages**

Wed, [Oct 14, 2020](#), starting 9:51 pm & Wed, [April 28, 2021](#), starting 9:01 pm

But there was ZERO attention to what citizens have been requesting for many months (& to what the Planning Board is legally required to study to assess [Conditional-Use Zoning](#) compliance for mixed-use in Plaza):

Increase in all modes of traffic at all hours ON the 10-acre Plaza site + in ALL surrounding Neighborhood paths/streets, including potential connector to Church Hill parking

Instead, Colonial Durham (CDA) has been allowed to limit the boundaries of traffic inquiry:

CDA says multi-modal traffic impact on the site from adding 258 student residents and their guests to the Mill Plaza “should not...be taken into consideration for this application because the residents won’t be parking on site. We’re really talking about [added car-traffic impact only from] 25,000* square feet of commercial.”

–CDA’s Sean McCauley, [Oct 14, 2020](#), 9:52:56 pm



**In truth, CDA proposes to add only 23,000 sf of commercial space, the minimum required under the Legal Settlement.*

Per submitted studies: 258 tenants & guests magically teleport to & from OFF-site crosswalks – without moving through Plaza from/to their beds



October 14, 2020, 10:31 pm, Planning Board Hearing

Joe Persechino's screen

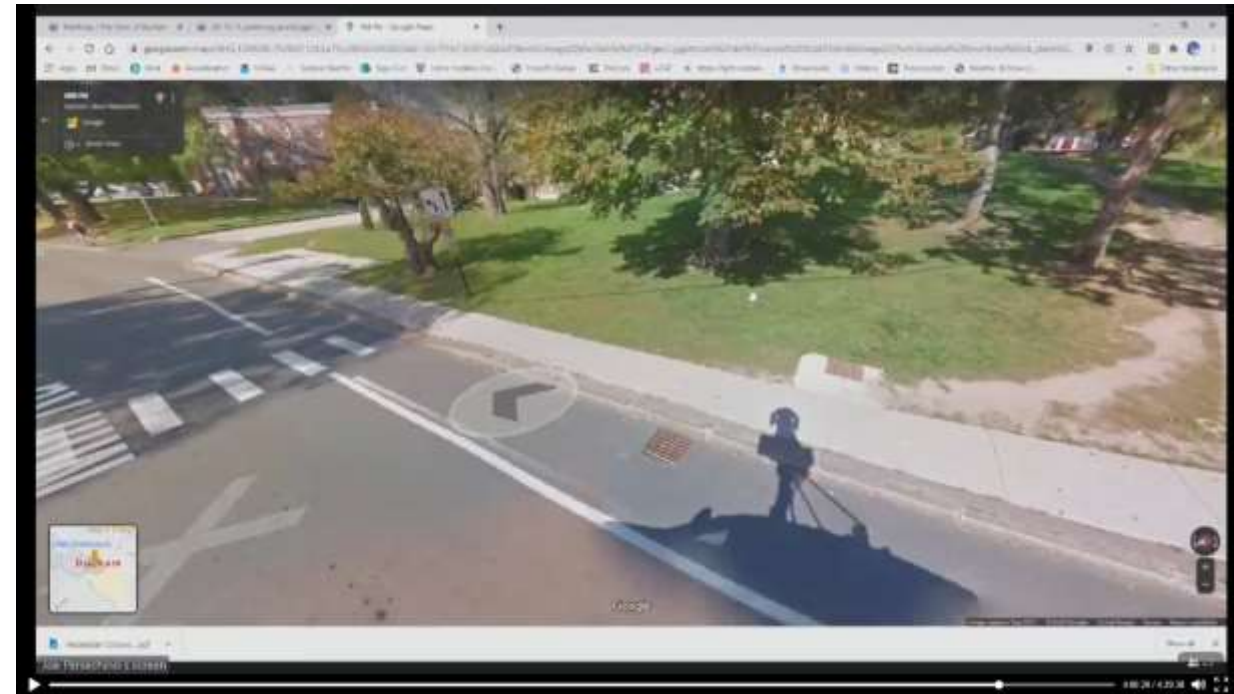
3:31:18 / 4:29:30

Yes, extensive *OFF-SITE* crosswalks analysis was done

BUT without studying projected impact of 258 tenants & guests moving **on & through Mill Plaza & through Faculty Neighborhood footpaths & streets**



October 14, 2020, 11 pm, Planning Board Hearing



October 14, 2020, 11 pm, Planning Board Hearing

Where is study of ADDED multi-modal on-site Plaza traffic?

(as promised in 2018 and long-requested by residents)

- **Foot traffic**
- **Bike traffic**
- **Skateboard traffic**
- **Scooter traffic**
- **Motorbike traffic**
- **Uber/Lyft traffic**



**Garrison Ave
Oct 24 2020 1:01a**



Uber, Main St, 1:27a



**Madbury Commons
Oct 11 2020 12:10a**



Madbury Rd



Main St Housing

Where is realistic study of existing UNH student movements, such as **WEEKEND *night life* from these & other prime “Observation Spots”** as predictors of movement within Plaza & around it if student housing is added?



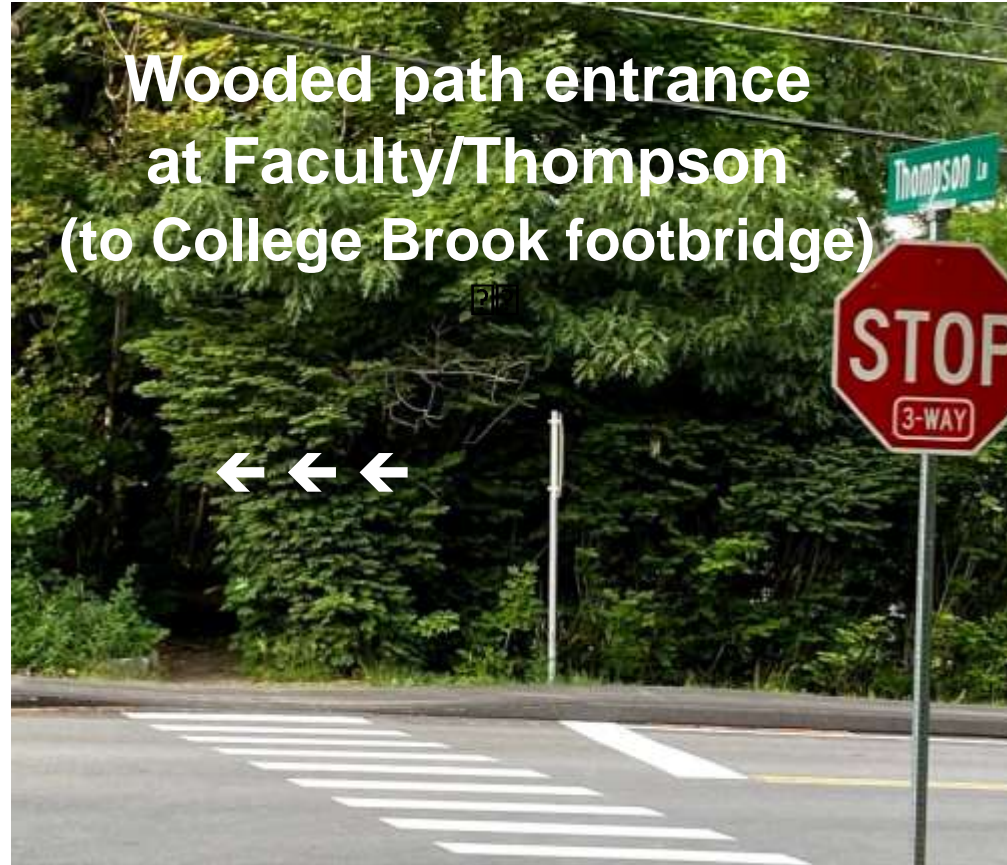
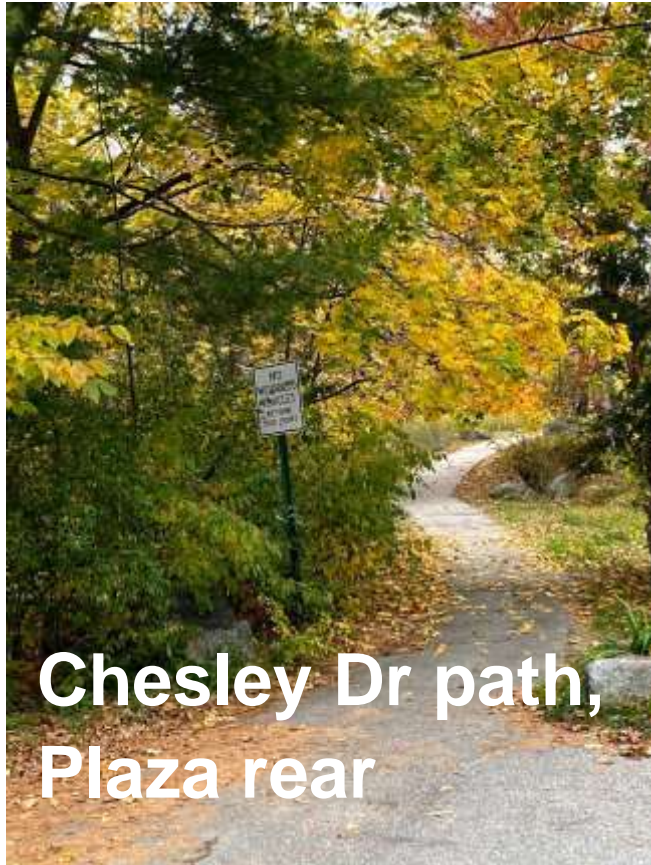
Pauly's Pocket Deck on Main St



Hop 'n' Grind table, Madbury Comm.

Unstudied: Pedestrian & Vehicle Impact on Surrounding Neighborhood

258 tenants barred by CDA from driving into Plaza will quickly discover & use these prime spots for vehicle pickup & drop-off of people & goods



Such pick-up & drop off uses would dramatically transform the surrounding neighborhood

Unstudied: projected traffic increase on College Brook Footbridge & Path



Proposed new Building C would be 150~ ft closer to this footbridge. Colonial Durham says it won't allow 258 new tenants to bring their cars into the Plaza. **Thus, it would be very likely that this bridge & the neighborhood paths would become popular, noisy, & trash-filled play spaces and routes for student pick-up & drop-off.**

From: Joshua Meyrowitz <prof.joshua.meyrowitz@gmail.com>

Date: Tuesday, September 15, 2020 at 4:37 PM

To: Rick Taintor <rtaintor@ci.durham.nh.us>

Subject: Lost email? Missing Traffic Issues?

Sample excerpt: Sept 2020 email to Planner Rick Taintor on “Missing Traffic Issues” (emphasis added)

Dear Rick,

I very much appreciate your responsiveness to queries over several years. In that context, your lack of acknowledgement of, and response, to my Aug 20 email (excerpt repeated further below) on “Missing Issues for Aug 26”) makes me wonder if my message (or your response?) somehow went astray in the digital veldt.

Thus, I write again, but dividing the topics of that email, focusing here on confusions and omissions in the Traffic Impact Study, including the increased drop-off and pickup foot and car traffic on Chesley Dr, on the cherished wooded and stone-walled path connecting Faculty Rd at Thompson Lane to the Chesley Marsh, and so on. (See repeat of that part of the earlier message below.)

Faculty Rd neighbors have since mentioned to me concern also about the likely dramatic increase in the car travel “shortcut” use of Mill Pond Rd to Faculty Rd to Mill Rd (to get around the frequent backup of traffic on Main St at Church Hill and the loop around the Post Office and Puttee Brook Lane and back into Main St, and then down Mill Rd to the Plaza or UNH).

That is, many people use the left-turn green arrow at the old Court House (in “gasoline alley”) to turn onto Newmarket Rd and then make the first right on Mill Pond Rd at the Town Hall and then a right on Faculty Rd. That shortcut through Faculty Rd is used both for making lefts on Mill Rd to UNH and making rights on Mill Rd to enter the Plaza with a simple right turn (instead of the complexity of trying to make a left into the Plaza with there being no traffic light at the Plaza entrance to stop traffic coming from the other direction).

Additionally, Durham residents I know who own rental properties indicate that even a smaller number of student rentals lead to a dramatic increase in UPS and Fed Ex and USPS trucks dropping off online orders. See, for example, this letter from 2016, describing all the traffic for a 25-tenant property (one-tenth of CDA's student tenant goal): [Comments from Dick Gsottschneider](#)

January 27, 2021: Planning Board Votes to Narrow Traffic Study *with no public input at a “Public Hearing”*

The Planning Board violated Public Hearing procedures on January 27, 2021 by allowing the applicant to influence deliberations and voting on the scope of traffic studies (and other topics that evening) but *without any prior public input*. See [video](#) (10:35:33pm+ & [minutes](#) pp. 19-20).

“Attorney Pollack provided details on two scopes of work that had been written out, one which was a peer review and one for traffic modeling. He said the applicant thought burdening the application with the traffic modeling was inappropriate and unreasonable, and suggested that if the Town wanted the modeling, it could commission it on its own.” (Minutes, p. 19; the Board yielded to that request)



“Mr. Bubar noted that there had been discussion about pedestrian traffic. Mr. Taintor said the model incorporated pedestrians only as a fraction in the vehicle system, but said it wouldn’t address the pedestrians that would be living at Mill Plaza.” (Minutes, p. 20; core traffic issue for residents was erased)

The few members of the public still attending at 11:00:30 pm were told to **“keep it short”** (by the Council Rep to the Planning Board) and **“I think it’s in your interest, if people want to speak, to speak as quickly as possible”** (by the Acting PB Chair) with not much influence, obviously, over the decisions that had already been made.

Absurd Claim **in *provided* Traffic Studies**

**“peak hour” for “projected pedestrian trips”
for college students on Saturdays is midday!**

“It is expected 133 pedestrian trips will be generated during the
weekday evening and **Saturday midday peak hours.**”

– Tighe & Bond, [Updated Traffic Study](#) 4-19-21, p. 3 (of 251 pages)

***“MIDDAY” is about 12 hours off the actual peak
student-traffic mark of Saturdays!***

And, during the actual “peak hours,” there are more “pedestrian trips” in minutes than Tighe & Bond counted in hours.

Actual “liveliest” steady student flow time on Saturdays: 11:30pm to 1:30am



Such “action” would be in store for families abutting Mill Plaza if 258 students are allowed to move in.





Simple observation & photography would show what has yet to be examined (except by residents):

“peak Saturday hours for student pedestrian trips” = 11:30 pm to 1:30 am

Those hours must be studied (when UNH in session) to see the “external impacts” on abutting properties & neighborhood if 258 student beds to be added to the Plaza, per Conditional-Use Zoning.



Scorpions Bar & Grill, Main St
Sat, Oct 23, 2021, 11:47 pm

MADBURY COMMONS

“March to Main Street”

Sat, Sept 26, 2020

11:49 pm →

[YouTube video](#) (00:11)

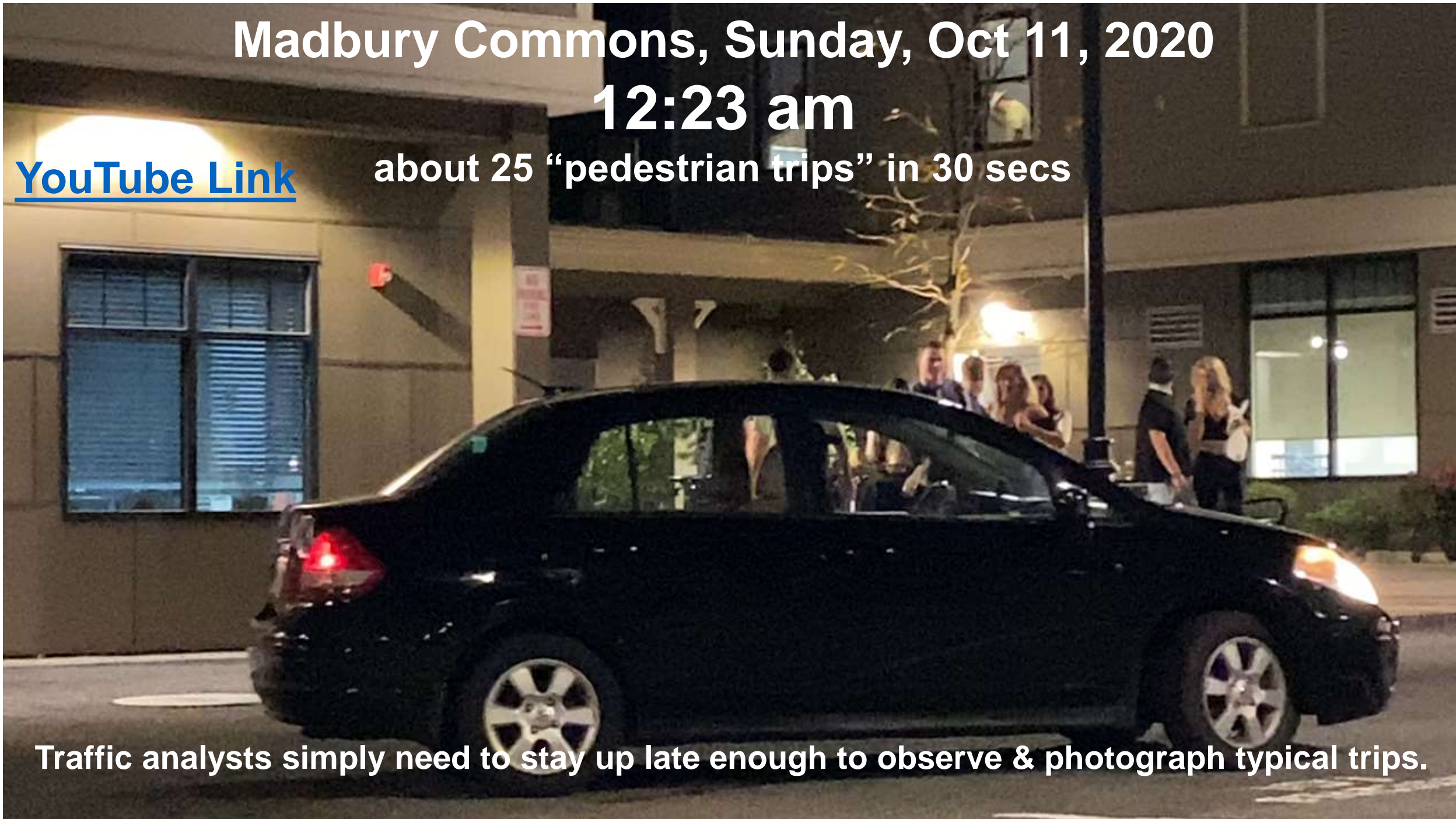


Madbury Commons, Sunday, Oct 11, 2020

12:23 am

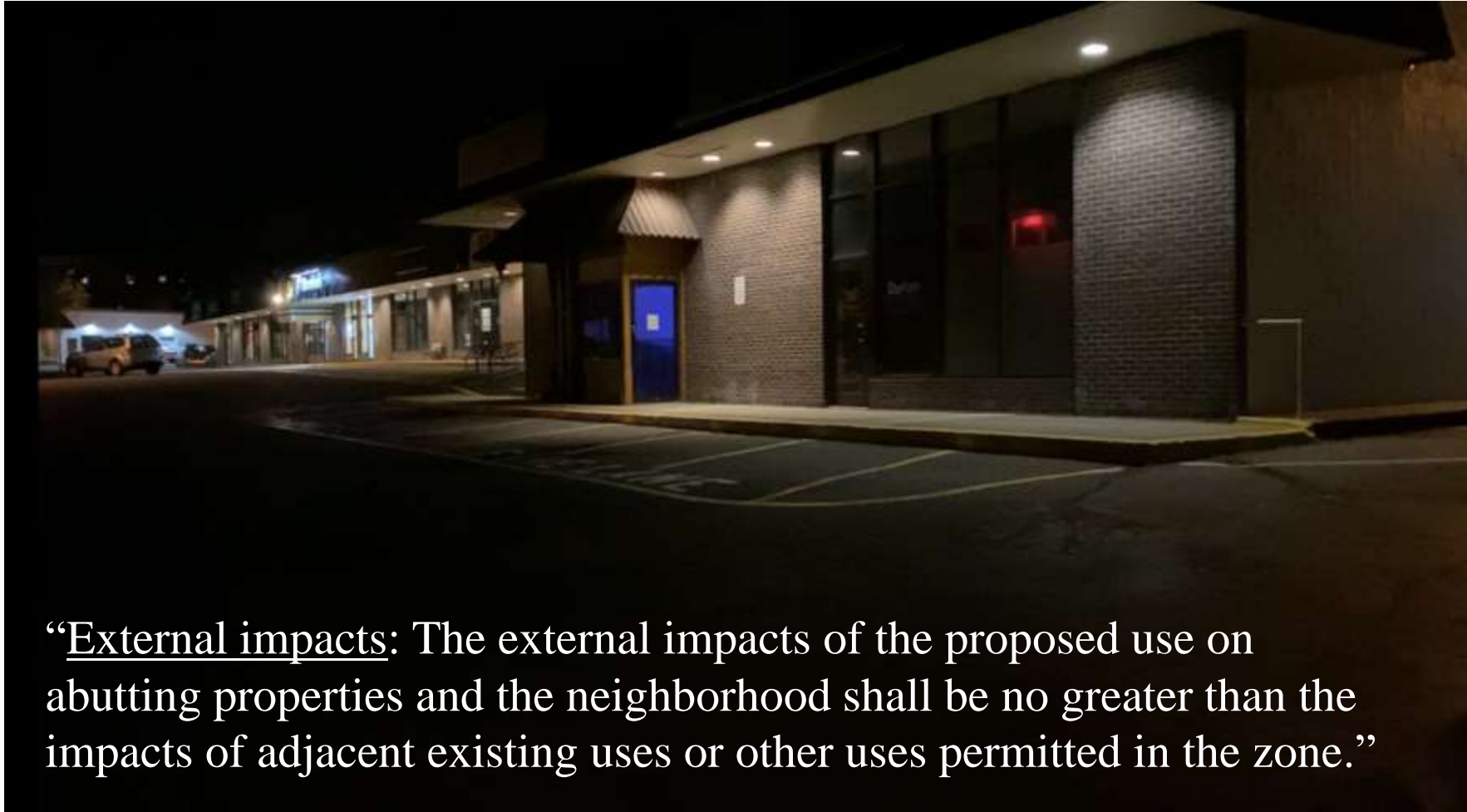
about 25 “pedestrian trips” in 30 secs

[YouTube Link](#)



Traffic analysts simply need to stay up late enough to observe & photograph typical trips.

Why has there been NO observation of late-night multi-model travel at Main/MadCom, as it *contrasts* with vacant & quiet Mill Plaza?



Conditional Use

“This shall include, but not be limited to, **TRAFFIC, noise, odors, vibrations, dust, fumes, hours of operation, and exterior lighting and glare.**”

Video Fri 10/2/20 11:28p

The Plaza has been a BUFFER from sights & sounds of late-night activity on campus, Main St, & beyond

Public Hearing on Mill Plaza, [April 28, 2021](#), 11:04:12 pm

after I showed videos of late-night student pedestrian activity:

Board Member James Bubar – “Ah, I guess I’m a little concerned about whether our consultant seriously looked at the pedestrian traffic numbers. We’ve heard various public comment tonight that suggests there’s going to be more pedestrians than I think maybe was in the study. I guess I’d like to hear again, uh, she’s comfortable with the study? As it relates to pedestrians?”



RSG Consultant Erica Wygonik on limits of “standard lens”

Response to James Bubar / Public Hearing on Mill Plaza, [April 28, 2021](#), 11:05 pm

“I think the public raised some interesting questions, and I appreciated the documentation of the nighttime activity. It’s definitely a tricky situation. From a *traffic* perspective, the pedestrian activity in the late hours is probably not that much of a concern in terms of the, you know, the vehicular volumes are so low that even if the pedestrian volumes are quite high, the overall pedestrian levels are not expected to be a problem and that tends to be the lens, you know. The standard guidelines of traffic analysis focus on that, for better or for worse.

Um, you know, I feel like the pedestrian activity in those late hours really is more of a noise concern, a safety concern. I mean, I don’t think that activity, it’s not something we traditionally would look at in terms of concerns about capacity, congestion, adequate infrastructure, which is the lens that we, you know, is the framework that we examine for transportation through. Um. I don’t know. I don’t know if that helps.”



Yet, late night traffic safety & noise concerns, as well as projected increased intensity & hours of activity on & around Mill Plaza site and into the neighborhood, are exactly what the PB should be studying – by whatever means necessary and by whatever label, “traffic” or not, is given to those forms of movement – for proper assessment of the “external impacts” on the neighborhood, per Conditional-Use Zoning criteria.

Board Member James Bubar response to RSG Consultant Wygonik



Chair Rasmussen: “James? Does that help, James?”

11:06:53 pm **James Bubar**—“Uh, hum. It explains the *review*. Um, I don’t know, uh. I have driven through Main Street, you know, in the midnight hour, and I see a bunch of folks having a good time, and sometimes they’re in the road. And so I drive 5 miles an hour. I, you know. I’m not interested in hitting any of them; they might hurt my car. So, um, I guess, I’m uncomfortable that we may not have a good handle on what *really* the implications of 258 new pedestrians might cause.... And I think that’s the point of doing the study, and I don’t know that we have a clear direction on the implications of 258 students in the plaza.”

Seems to be leading (finally) to what has long-been promised & requested...

Council Rep Sally Tobias

response to RSG Consultant Erica Wygonik & Public Input

11:08:36 pm – **Council Rep Sally Tobias:** “It seems like the traffic, study—. Do we have a report that is geared only on pedestrians? We don’t really have that. A traffic study and the pedestrians access, as she explains, is how it affects the *traffic* [vehicles]. **So we don’t have a *pedestrian* study that we require.** We know that there will be more people because of that. So. I get the frustration.... But do we have a vehicle that we can ask them to provide?”



Seems to be leading further to what has long-been promised & requested...

Contract Planner Rick Taintor, [April 28, 2021](#), 11:09:15 pm
response to Public Input, RSG Consultant, Bubar, & Tobias

Rick Taintor: “I think, I would say, to put it in simplest terms, the reason that we, the way this study is done is that it adds pedestrians to a vehicle network. Right? And the pedestrians kind of act as a block.... And so that was one of the things we talked about with the crosswalk near Hannaford’s and turning that into a Rapid Reflecting Beacon. **Because that’s, at peak times, that’s going to stop traffic completely.*** It’s going to be like a police officer, perhaps it will even be stronger than a police officer. Because a police officer is going to be trying to balance the pedestrians and the vehicles. And that RRFB is probably just, you know, accept the pedestrians going across.
(Taintor’s comment continues on next page →)



****See p. 14 bolded Faculty Rd neighbors’ concerns regarding this blockage & likely “shortcuts” down Faculty Rd.***

Cont'd: Contract Planner Rick Taintor, [April 28, 2021](#), 11:10:12 pm
response to Public Input, RSG Consultant, Bubar, & Tobias

Rick Taintor (continues): “So, I guess there’s two ways you want to look at pedestrians. One is the way Joshua Meyrowitz is looking at it: **What is the impact on the community, a lot of pedestrians out in the middle of the night? But that’s not what we asked the traffic study to do.** We asked the traffic study to say what is going to be the impact on downtown traffic congestion. With cars and pedestrians working together through the system. I don’t think that there’s a— if you wanted to have more of a study of pedestrians you’d have to decide what the question would be that you want to have answered.”



The questions the public has requested be answered have been clear for months: movement “on-site,” “within site” – and on neighborhood paths & streets

Board Decision, 11:12 pm, [April 28, 2021](#)

Chair Rasmussen asks if Board is happy with submitted traffic reports
(which claim to show no significant additional “traffic” from the proposed Mill Plaza use)

Sally Tobias: “I’m good.”

Lorne Parnell: “I can accept it as it is.”...

Richard Kelley: “I think the traffic study is fine.”...



No Planning Board member asked for further study of traffic impact to follow through on June 2018 commitment, months of residents’ requests, and input at this public hearing.

Robin Mower Posted [Email](#), May 3, 2021

“the addition of 258 beds means at least 258 students plus their guests will be *walking through* the site. They will be *crossing the site* several times a day....”

“Why has the Planning Board NOT required a pedestrian traffic study for Mill Plaza?”

....as it has for Madbury Commons*

See the 12-page January 2014 [“Pedestrian Evaluation”](#) for Madbury Commons.

“I hope that at the May 19th [2021] meeting dedicated to the Mill Plaza application the Board will discuss and agree to requiring such a [pedestrian impact] study.” *(It did not.)*

**Why NO study of Plaza tenant/guests movements “on-site,”
“within site” – and on neighborhood paths & streets?**

*Also note that pedestrian traffic for Madbury Commons was studied even though the project was *not* subject to Conditional Use (CU) for Mixed-Use with Residential and even though it does *not* abut family homes. Mill Plaza is subject to CU review, and it abuts Durham’s largest single-family neighborhood.

Joshua Meyrowitz Email Exchange with Rick Taintor

May 4, 2021 (9 months after my first traffic query to him)

Joshua Meyrowitz: “Why, after all this time and public mentions...has this study of the real traffic impact...NOT been done? And when will it finally be done?”

Rick Taintor: “....You (and others) have strongly and on multiple occasions raised this concern to the Board. If Board members do not wish to pursue it, it is not in my ‘power and authority’ to override them.”

* * *

BUT: *avoiding* study of on- & near-site movement does not mean that it doesn't exist.

Repeat: [Town Attorney advised](#) Board in Sept 2018: CU Zoning Article provides “*non-exclusive*” list of things Board must consider for compliance. **Impacts not assessable via traditional methods must be researched through other means!**

To summarize: 2018 Promise vs. 2021 Reality

2018: Traffic impact *on* and *within* Mill Plaza to be studied:

“[Planning Board Member] **Mr. Parnell** said a major issue in regard to the traffic analysis was pedestrians, and he spoke about the **importance of doing a study of current and future pedestrian traffic on the site....**” —June 13, 2018 PB [minutes](#), p. 8 [emphasis added]

2021: Public Silenced & Promise As-Yet Unfulfilled

At a Public Hearing on Mill Plaza on Jan 27, 2021 ([video](#)), the PB made major decisions about which traffic studies to commission and which not to commission (10:35 to 10:44:20 pm). In violation of Public Hearing rules, the public was not allowed to speak until long after the deliberations, motions, and voting were complete (although the applicant *was* allowed to speak throughout and to influence the voting).

There has yet to be a study of increase in *on-site* (& Faculty Neighborhood) pedestrian & other traffic-mode impact from proposed addition of 258 “beds” to Mill Plaza – despite the 2018 promise and despite many months of citizen requests for it.

An all-too-familiar pattern:

Off-Target Traffic Questions Yield Off-Target Traffic Answers

On this and many other critical site-plan review issues, the Planning Board has put itself in the position of a patient who needs to know whether his foot is broken and instead solicits reams of detailed electro-cardiogram data.

The Planning Board has ***not*** pursued the assessments necessary & ***required*** for Conditional-Use review of the CDA Site Plan in terms of *ALL the relevant* “external impacts of the proposed use on abutting properties and the neighborhood....”

**Relying on methods mis-matched to the task
does not make the ignored data non-existent.**

There *are* many Methods & Experts for on-site & near-site multi-modal traffic analysis

Simple googling yields many planning documents discussing ways to overcome the bias & limits of the types of TIS methods used by Tighe & Bond & RSG for studying Mill Plaza “traffic Impact”

[“Tool for predicting pedestrian flow expands its reach,”](#) Oct 8, 2021. “[A] robust tool that can be used for estimating pedestrian activity on city streets, for which data are usually nonexistent, and for predicting changes in pedestrian flows in response to changes in the built environment over time.”

[Pedestrians in Urban Development,](#) Andres Sevtsuk | TEDxTallinn, “We know that our cities need change. But we still use measuring car traffic as the basis of changes. What if we measured pedestrian traffic instead?”

[Bicycle and Pedestrian Forecasting Tools: State of the Practice,](#) April 2015, 28 pp. “Travel and demand forecasting methods have long been used to estimate the number of vehicles traveling on a specific street or network and to estimate ridership for mass transit.... However, these methods have traditionally excluded pedestrian and bicycle activity.”

[How To Estimate Pedestrian Demand: Researchers develop a tool for forecasting walk trips & pedestrian destination choice,](#) Nov 2015, 2 pp. “For generations, planners have been using statistical models to forecast travel demand, but these models have traditionally been auto-centered. The new tool will allow planners to allocate infrastructure based on pedestrian demand....”

[Changing the Paradigm of Traffic Impact Studies,](#) 2014, 6 pp. Critiques “primary objective of moving rubber-tired vehicles.”

[Rewriting Our Nation’s Deadly Traffic Manual,](#) 2021, 19 pp, Critiques “giving preference to driving over other modes of transportation.”

[Driving change: Exploring the adoption of multimodal local traffic impact assessment practices,](#) 2021, 18 pp.

More on-target answers are available, but have not been sought!

If the “standard lens” for traffic-impact modeling is blind to the “external impacts” from *on-site & surrounding multi-modal traffic increase* for Mill Plaza proposal, then other methods must be used. Many come quickly to mind:

- Observation of existing student housing complexes in Durham & other college towns for peak movement times & patterns, including late on weekend nights.
- Using trail passage counters, taking photographs, and videos.
- “Role-playing site walks” to predict where/how student tenants would travel to/from “beds” from/to other places.
- Drawing on extensive college-town research on interactions between student housing and family neighborhoods.
- Interviewing college students regarding their peak travel times and modes and pathways of travel.
- Interviewing college & police officials, and residents living near student housing in Durham & other college towns.
- Describing the quantitative and qualitative conclusions.



Sample YouTube videos of the [Faculty Neighborhood](#) Foot/Bike Paths



These paths, which now both connect & protect the Faculty Neighborhood to/from the commercial core & “student zones,” would almost certainly become passageways, pickup/drop-off routes, and hangout & play spots for 258 new college-student Mill Plaza tenants and their guests



- ❑ [Chesley Drive into footpath to Plaza](#), May 31, 2021, 7:09pm (01:06) **Narrated**
- ❑ [Mill Plaza into Chesley Path](#), June 3 2021 5:48pm (02:14) **Narrated** (Walking from rear of Plaza into Chesley Path to explain proximity; related Church Hill Woods-to-Parking-Lot, described as pending in June 2021.)
- ❑ [College Brook footbridge to Thompson Ln](#), May 31 2021 7:43 pm, **Time Lapse** (8 secs)
- ❑ [Footbridge to Thompson Lane](#), May 31 2021, 7:10pm (02:08) regular speed, **Narrated**
- ❑ Thompson Lane (at Faculty Rd) & Valentine Hill Rd – [28 Faculty Neighborhood Homes in 28 secs!](#) April 26, 2020 (*Illustrating a very compact neighborhood with not much privacy, few sound/visual buffers – and very worried about college-student “invasions”; video ends looking toward Faculty Rd & entrance to the “Magic Path”*)
- ❑ From [Thompson Lane at Faculty Rd into the “Magic Path”](#) (**Time Lapse**, 8 secs), April 19 2020, 4:45 pm. When the leaves are down. The proposed building new Building C would be 150 feet closer to the footbridge.

“Traffic Impact”: What’s Been Ignored?

NOTE: If Plaza-tenant multi-modal movement on-site, near-site, and on neighborhood paths/streets is not “traffic” in the PB’s view, then call it something else (“trip generation,” “passage,” “travel,” “movement,” “action,” “presence,” “transport” – or whatever) – and then study it as an external impact of the site plan. As the Town Attorney has advised the Board, the Conditional-Use ordinance provides a “non-exclusive” list of external-impact criteria; *any* negative external impact, whether listed in the ordinance or not must be considered. **As Attorney Laura Spector-Morgan [writes](#):** “The board might also consider other things that are not specified in the ordinance or on the checklist but are relevant given a specific application. We know this from the language ‘this includes but is not limited to.’”

Sources*

This report is based on other residents’ input as well as my emails to Contract Planner Rick Taintor in Aug & Sept 2020 (subject “Missing Traffic Issues”) and my email to Rick Taintor **Disheartening Trafficking Fantasies** ([J Meyrowitz 4-30-21](#)), my public comments at Planning Board hearings on Oct 14, 2020 ([video](#), 11:09p) and on April 28, 2021 ([video](#), at 10:37p), May 19, 2021 ([video](#), at 7:32p), a Public Comment to the Town Council, October 18, 2021 (7:19:12 pm [video](#)), an overview at the Planning Board hearing on Dec 8, 2021 ([video](#), 9:28:31), and in my posted, but ignored submissions, including: **CDA’s Magical Projections** ([J Meyrowitz 11-12-20](#)), **CDA’s Trafficking Fantasies** ([J Meyrowitz 5-14-21](#)); and **CU Zoning Variables: Buffers, Distance, Scale, Hours of Activity, & Type of Tenants** ([J Meyrowitz 8-19-21](#)). Also based on the comments I *would have made* on Jan 27, 2021 ([video](#); [minutes](#)), had the Planning Board followed Public Hearing procedures and allowed public input before they deliberated and voted on what traffic studies they did and did not want. (Instead, the few members of the public still there at 11:00 pm were told to “keep it short” and “speak as quickly as possible,” with not much influence, obviously, over decisions that had already been made.) See also my related 2-page letter, with hot inks: [Interconnected threads of input on Mill Plaza proposal’s impact on the Neighborhood](#) (12-29-21), and my cover note to: **Conditional Use Review – Durham Town Attorney Guidance**, [J Meyrowitz 1-3-22](#).

*The Meyrowitz comments listed here can also be found by date among 300+ [Citizen Comments](#)

Required “Traffic Impact” Analyses for Conditional-Use Review of Mill Plaza Proposal

Not Yet Studied as of January 2022:

Likely increase in on-site (& neighborhood) pedestrian & other travel-mode impact from proposed addition of 258 “beds” to Mill Plaza

*Relying on methods mis-matched to the task
does not make the ignored data non-existent.*

It’s not too late to study Foot traffic, Bike traffic, Skateboard traffic, Scooter traffic, Motorbike traffic, Friend pick-up and drop-off traffic, and Uber/Lyft traffic

Joshua Meyrowitz, 7 Chesley Drive, Durham, NH

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