

Hi Ms. Needell,

Thanks to you and the Commission for working to protect Durham's precious natural resources against incursion by the proposed project in Mill Plaza. As you have probably gathered, the process before the planning board has been long on evasion and short on facts. It often seems that we know neither where the application is headed, nor where it stands in the current day, which certainly makes any kind of sound decision making a lot harder on the part of town boards and commissions.

We heard from the applicant at the Conservation Commission meeting on 11/23 that their development proposal on the Mill Plaza Parcel would have 6.7 acres of impervious surface. That is a helpful data point only if we have a lot more information that appears to be lacking.

I believe the Conservation Commission's job will be easier if it is in command of some basic facts regarding the actual status of Mill Plaza versus what is proposed and that this should inform your decisions. If you are already in possession of these facts, please share them with residents. If not, could you please require the applicant to provide this data PRIOR TO the next commission meeting, which should not be difficult given that this application process has been ongoing for years. Of course this information should have been requested by the Planning Board long ago, and you should already have it at your disposal, but I don't believe that to be the case. It seems to me that the public also has the right to this very basic information of where we are and where it is proposed we go.

There follows a simple table that the applicant could be asked to fill out. This very basic information will make it easier to assess the applicant's proposal:

Measurement	Actual	Proposed
IMPERVIOUS VS. PERVIOUS AREA		
Total acreage of the parcel		
Total <i>impervious</i> acreage		6.7 acres
Impervious acreage comprised of pavement		
Impervious acreage comprised of buildings		
Impervious acreage comprised of sidewalk		
Total <i>pervious</i> acreage		
DISTRIBUTION OF PERVIOUS AREA		
Pervious surface in northeast quadrant of the plaza		
Southeast quadrant		
Northwest quadrant		
Southwest quadrant		

How much pervious surface area is on the Faculty Rd side of College Brook?		
What is the total pervious surface area that corresponds with green islands/space within the parking lot (internal)?		
NATURAL BUFFER		
Total natural buffer acreage		
Buffer acreage to south of the plaza (Faculty)		
Buffer acreage to east of the plaza (Churchill/Chesley)		
Buffer acreage to north of plaza (Main St.)		
Buffer acreage to west of the plaza (Mill Rd.)		

In addition, I have one question for the Conservation Commission to answer. What would the amount (area) of impervious surface that would be converted to pervious IF the College Brook buffer(s) were restored to the maximum allowed amount (75 ft)? (We can ignore the question of whether a sidewalk is to exist or whether the sidewalk itself will be pervious/impervious and assume that no sidewalk will exist at all).

I would like to urge you to recover the maximum buffer possible under town and state law. This would seem to be consistent with your mission to protect natural resources and to initially seek to recover less than that would seem to be inconsistent with your mission. As I understand it, it is not your job to consider whether recovering the natural buffer would make the project less lucrative for the developer, nor is it your job to consider any engineering difficulties that a full recovery of the buffer would require.

Thank you again for your diligence in evaluating this complex project of great impact. I hope that you will take all of the time you need to evaluate it carefully rather than yielding to pressure to rush through it.

Kind regards,

Matt

Matthew Komonchak
+1 (917) 242 1991
matt.komonchak@gmail.com
SKYPE: gafanhoto77