

— **COMMERCIAL SPACE: WHAT IS THE INCREMENTAL AMOUNT?** —

February 6, 2022

Planning Board
8 Newmarket Road
Durham, NH 03824

Re: Mill Plaza Redevelopment. 7 Mill Road. Continued review of application for site plan and conditional use for mixed-use redevelopment project, drive-through facility for bank, and activity within the wetland and shoreland overlay districts. Colonial Durham Associates, property owner....Central Business District. Map 5, Lot 1-1.

Dear Members of the Board,

The December 14, 2015 Settlement Agreement requires Colonial Durham Associates to provide between 80,000 and 90,000 square feet of commercial use, per terms in Paragraph 1:

- c. The Revised Application will provide for a total development of existing and new non-residential commercial space, exclusive of parking, totaling at least 80,000 to 90,000 sq. ft.

The Agreement is not the purview of the Planning Board, but we should all be clear about what is promised. Some have emphasized that the community would “get” 80,000 of “new commercial.” “Newly built,” yes, but not incremental new use.

24,913 square feet of incremental commercial use

In other words, on this nearly-10-acre site the proposed project would deliver incremental commercial use square footage about 1.5 times the size of the Hannaford supermarket. (Chuck Cressy, former Hannaford owner, said is about 17,000 sq ft.)

History (see math on next page)

- [October 8, 2014, Planner's Recommendation:](#)
“...Design Review for partial redevelopment of Mill Plaza Shopping Center site including 44,110 square feet of new commercial space...”
- [October 22, 2014 Planning Board minutes:](#)
“Mr. Wagner [DeStefano Architects] ...said there was current 55,337 sf on the site, and said the proposed development would have 75,563 sf of new commercial space, 20,226 sf of which would be new commercial office and retail space.”
- [Updated site plan 1-8-15](#) (plan dated 14 January 2015)
Commercial [existing and new] = 89,400 sq ft; existing Building A = 31,200 sq ft
- [Site Plan 1-20-16](#)
Building A: plus/minus 31,300 sq feet
- Formal site plan application accepted June 13, 2018

- [Supplemental Plans 6-11-18](#): Sheet A10.1 shows existing commercial space for Building A (Hannaford/Rite Aid) = 31,165 sq ft
- [Floor Area by Building and by Use](#) (undated): See the table on comparing “A10 plans” to “Narrative.” (I do not know what “narrative” refers to.)
- [Applicant's Presentation 6-27-18](#)
existing = 31,165 sq ft; total when redeveloped = of 90, 375 sq ft; NEW = 59,210 sq ft [i.e., newly constructed, not incremental]
(See also for dramatically different treatment of Building A and sidewalk in front of the building)
- [Site Plan in Color 10-20-20](#) shows Building A with 1,600 sq for a restaurant; 17,315 for retail; and 12,250 for retail, totaling 31,165 sq ft.
- [Updated Site Plan 12-1-21](#) Sheet C-102: nonresidential total = 80,250 sq ft

Math: Commercial square footage

- 80,250 sq ft for the entire redeveloped site
- 55,337 sq ft existing minus 31,165 sq ft Hannaford/Rite Aid building = 24,172 sq ft for existing “rear building”
- 80,250 sq ft minus 31,165 Hannaford/Rite Aid = 49,085 sq ft “newly built”
- **49,085 “newly built” minus 24,172 “rear building” = 24,913 incremental new**

Some of the “newly built” commercial uses will most certainly attract only the residents of Building B and C or of the abutting Orion student housing, whether the fitness center or the bank or most-likely likely retail.

Realistically: How much of the new—whether newly built or incremental—commercial use is likely to service and attract nonstudent residents? Investment follows the market. Again: Not the purview of the Board, but...

Regards,

Robin