

From: RobinM
To: [Rick Taintor](#)
Cc: [Karen Edwards](#); [Todd Selig](#); [external forward for acorrow](#)
Subject: Mill Plaza | site walk? | College Brook
Date: Monday, July 09, 2018 8:35:25 AM

Please forward this email to the Planning Board and Conservation Commission and post online. Thank you.

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Greetings,

As of this morning, no site walk for the formal Mill Plaza redevelopment application has been scheduled.

It is my experience that on the evening when the Planning Board accepts a formal application that has unusual site aspects, it typically sets a date not only for a public hearing but also for a site walk immediately prior to the opening public hearing meeting, e.g., at 4:00 P.M. that same date.

Why has a public hearing been opened for the Mill Plaza without having first held a site walk on this largest developable parcel in downtown Durham -- a parcel that, in the words of the applicant's attorney, is *unique*?

Only three (3) sitting members of the Planning Board attended the November 14, 2016 site walk -- which was held during the nonbinding Design Review phase. [See excerpt from Paul Rasmussen's site walk notes below.] I would go so far as to say that no Board member should deliberate or vote on this application who has not participated in a site walk.

Surely, the argument that *everyone knows the Plaza* cannot be the rationale?

Most people *know* the site only from the perspective of driving to a destination at the Plaza and walking directly to it from their cars. Many residents may not even be aware that the College Brook exists, let alone what challenges it has faced from both UNH and the Mill Plaza, practices from which have led to its impairment.

College Brook, a focus of much concern, lies at the bottom of a very steep slope for much of the stretch of the Plaza pavement. This area is where the most minimal of buffers would be continued but would provide significant incremental functionality were remediation to occur. In contrast, most of the proposed *increased natural buffer* would lie to the southeastern portion of the site, closest to Chesley Drive, farthest from the most auto-related runoff and where the slope is less acute and thus stormwater runoff might be better infiltrated even today.

Indeed, I urge the Planning Board (1) to hold more than one site walk, as appropriate, and (2) to invite the Conservation Commission to join you for the express purpose of understanding how the proposal would impact College Brook.

Any site walk for this application should extend to the footpath to Faculty Road and to locations at Brookside Commons, Chesley Drive, and Faculty Road in order to provide abutter and neighborhood perspectives. A second site walk in late fall would be appropriate to reveal

the impact of the Plaza during the six or more months of the year when there is no foliage buffer.

(Andrew Corrow is copied herewith as the Town Council Representative to the Conservation Commission.)

Regards,

Robin Mower
Durham, NH 03824

Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot,
nothing is going to get better. It's not.

-- Theodor Seuss Geisel, author and illustrator

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From: pnrasm@yahoo.com [<mailto:pnrasm@yahoo.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, November 15, 2016 1:57 PM
To: Karen Edwards; Michael Behrendt; einnes@harriman.com
Subject: Minutes: Mill Plaza Site Walk Nov 14, 2016

Karen, Michael,

Below are my minutes for the November 14 Site walk. Please post and distribute as proper.

Thank you,

Paul Rasmussen

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Attendees at 1:05 pm

Planning Board

<!--[if !supportLists]--> <!--[endif]-->Andrew Corrow

<!--[if !supportLists]--> <!--[endif]-->Paul Rasmussen

<!--[if !supportLists]--> <!--[endif]-->Barbara Dill

<!--[if !supportLists]--> <!--[endif]-->Bob Brown

<!--[if !supportLists]--> <!--[endif]-->Alan Bennett

Town Staff

<!--[if !supportLists]--> <!--[endif]-->Michael Behrendt

<!--[if !supportLists]--> <!--[endif]-->Todd Selig

<!--[if !supportLists]--> <!--[endif]-->April Talon
Applicant

<!--[if !supportLists]--> <!--[endif]-->Ari Pollack

<!--[if !supportLists]--> <!--[endif]-->Emily Innes

<!--[if !supportLists]--> <!--[endif]-->Sean McCauley