

7 August, 2017
Durham, NH

To: Michael Behrendt, Town Planner

From: Mark McPeak, resident and Mill Plaza abutter

Dear Michael,

I am unable to attend the meeting of the ZBA, scheduled for tomorrow. So I'm forwarding this note to express my opposition to the request for a variance to allow a "drive-thru facility accessory to a pharmacy."

As I understand it, "drive-thru facilities" are currently allowed for financial institutions only.

Allowing a variance for a drive-thru facility "accessory to a pharmacy" in the location indicated in the application for variance would certainly negatively impact the Brookside Commons community, where my wife and I live, and the Faculty Road neighborhood.

Such a drive-thru would increase traffic, light, noise, fumes, and pollution so close to our community, earlier in the day, and later in the evening than bank-related drive-thrus.

Please note that pharmacies in Lee and Newmarket offer drive-thru facilities, within just a few miles of Durham, which are within easy reach for mobility- or health-challenged customers" without reducing the walkability of our town center.

It is interesting to note that these nearby pharmacies, with drive-thru facilities, are in settings which are much more removed from local communities than the Mill Plaza. I attach below two images from Google Maps, showing distances from these pharmacies to the nearest residence.

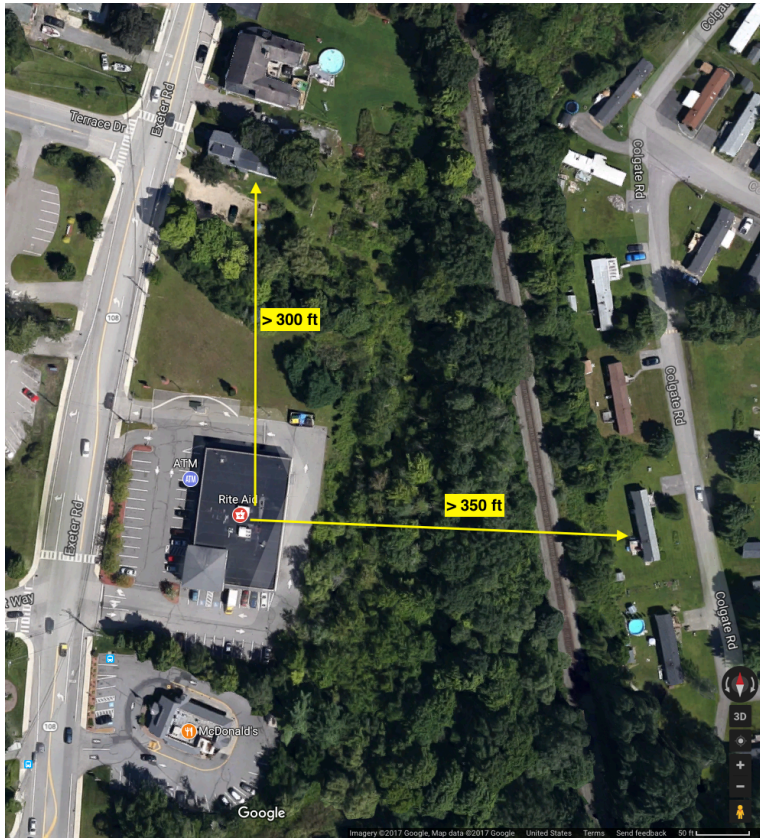
Allowing a "drive-thru facility" as an "enticement" to Rite-Aid may well enhance the financial return on investment for the owners of the Mill Plaza. However, as I understand it, one key purpose of "development standards" (zoning regulations) is to balance the rights of property owners with the long-term interests of the community. In this case, the character of our town center is at stake, and allowing drive-thrus is, for me, a step in the wrong direction.

The approval of this variance request will decrease the value of surrounding properties, and will be contrary to the public interest.

Thank you for the opportunity to share these thoughts.

Sincerely,

Mark McPeak



Newmarket Rite-Aid Drive-Thru:

Located more than 300 ft (approx.) from the nearest residence.



Lee Walgreens Drive-Thru:

Located far from any residence.