

Development Review Board
Hinesburg, VT
March 3, 2014

Re: Site Plan Reviews for Firehouse Plaza Driveway Relocation and Automotion
Parking Lot

Dear Members of the DRB:

It has come to the attention of the Conservation Commission that the DRB will soon be reviewing new Site Plans to redesign the entrance to Firehouse Plaza and to redesign the Automotion parking lot. Both the relocation and the redesign are conditions of the pending Hannaford's permit. The Conservation Commission asks the DRB to please impose stringent stormwater control requirements as a condition of approval for both Revised Site Plans.

The Conservation Commission is very concerned about stormwater run-off and the degradation of Patrick Brook. Right now, the stormwater system handling run-off from Firehouse Plaza is already inadequate. Water runs off the driveway and is quickly concentrated into small streams, by-passing opportunities for stormwater treatment and running directly toward Patrick Brook. Relocating the driveway will not correct this existing problem. Similarly, stormwater control at the Automotion site will not be helped by future construction. In fact, the proposed expansion of pavement at the Automotion lot will no doubt result in even more water flowing toward Patrick Brook.

According to the Hinesburg Site Plan Review Standards -- 4.3.4(6)—the DRB “shall review the site plan and supporting data... and shall take into consideration... Adequacy of drainage and grading plan, ensuring treatment and control of stormwater runoff, control of soil erosion during and after construction, and proper design solutions for steep slopes and poorly drained areas.”

The DRB has an obligation to the citizens of Hinesburg to protect their interests, both financial and environmental. Right now, stormwater is a pressing concern throughout the State. Towns are being charged with the obligation to clean up long-standing stormwater problems that have been neglected for decades. Recently, on February 27th, an article in the Burlington Free Press focused on stormwater problems in Williston:

(<http://www.burlingtonfreepress.com/article/20140227/NEWS02/302270006/Water-quality-on-Williston-s-mind>)

The cost to the Town of Williston has been estimated at \$6 million over the next 10 to 15 years. Hinesburg may well be faced with a similar burden in the coming years.

The Conservation Commission believes that both new Site Plan Reviews must include stormwater solutions paid for by the developer. In the absence of such conditions, remediation will no doubt still be required, but will eventually fall instead to the citizens of Hinesburg. Please act now to insure that our citizens are protected from future liability.

Meg Handler, for the Hinesburg Conservation Commission