

December 21, 2017

Concord City Council
41 Green Street
Concord, NH 03301

Members of the City Council,

As a homeowner in East Concord for 27 years, I have supported the Exit 16 intersection improvements since the plans were discussed and ultimately accepted over 10 years ago. Last year a group of community volunteers were convened to assist the design team (CMA Engineers, Ironwood Design and city staff) on the landscaping component of the Exit 16 Roundabout Improvement Project. An important aspect and concern of the improvement was the landscape enhancements and aesthetics as this project is the gateway to the East Concord Village.

For the most part I am very pleased with the result- Mark Ciborowski's tree was saved (and looks pretty healthy), street lights are on and the intersection is much safer. The contractors did a great job. I do have one major disappointment and concern that I have shared with the volunteer advisory committee and would like to share with you- the landscape budget was cut by more than half due to budget constraints in the final weeks of construction. Where 19 shade trees were planned only 10 were planted and of the 12 understory trees only 3 were planted. I did not have a final tally of the shrubs and perennials but I believe those were cut is half as well since over 1,200 were planned. In addition, the landscaping of the rain garden in front of the gas station was omitted so it is a grass depression that will need to be mowed. Martha Drukker did contact me prior to the completion to offer suggestions as to what could be saved under the budget constraints. Although disappointed I was not surprised but hoped that over time the original intent would be reached. For the most part I am sure that travelers through the intersection and the City Council are not aware that the final result was not as planned and expected from the volunteer committee. There were numerous meetings and a strong commitment for the group involved.

I respectfully request, with the support of the landscape advisory committee, that the City Council budget funds over the next few years to complete the planting plan as proposed. There are ways to achieve this: by reducing the size of the trees and possibly substitute some of the shrub varieties and reducing their size. Even if the City funds half of what was cut the surrounding landscape will benefit, especially with additional trees.

Thank you for your time and consideration and I look forward to your support and positive response.

Sincerely,

Susanne Smith Meyer PLA, ASLA
14 Shawmut Street