

Michael Long's "My Turn" entitled "Shadow Falls on Mall Development" is rife with errors and false accusations – including accusing the developer of "fraudulent" behavior, and accusing his team of architects of having "deliberately altered" images to "subvert the truth" in a way that "lied outright." These are just the latest in a long line of over-the-top statements made by Mr. Long in his quest to oppose this project at every turn. As the lead local architect on the Burlington Town Center redevelopment, I cannot let these recent accusations by Mr. Long go unanswered.

Mr. Long claims that a Google Earth rendering of the project designed to show an overview of how the building massing and height would fit into the cityscape of Burlington is misleading because it does not include shadows for the project. He states that a landscape architect unfamiliar with the project saw the image and wondered why shadow impacts weren't included.

What Mr. Long fails to mention amidst his accusations of fraud is that the aerial image in question – one of dozens presented to provide different perspectives on what the project would look like if built – was never meant to show shadow impacts. Instead, the project completed a substantial, comprehensive shadow study that was publicly presented during City Council meetings and again in the permitting process this winter.

He also fails to mention that the landscape architect who raised the question about the Google Earth image admitted that he was unaware of the shadow studies and, once he had reviewed them and taken the time to understand what they present, agreed they were accurate. The shadow study was presented to the DRB in February 2017. (Here is a [link](#).) It shows both current shadows from the mall as presently built, as well as an overlay of additional shadows that will be created by the new project, at three different times of the day in all four seasons of the year. The way we've designed the buildings, adhering to the setbacks the City requires, a great deal of the project's shadow actually falls within the boundaries of the project itself – though the shadow does extend further than the current buildings, especially in the lower light of winter – as one would expect.

It is irresponsible to raise unfounded accusations of fraud and lying, and yet the harm is done when the public reads the headline, skims the piece, and loses confidence in the project or the process. This project has gone through dozens and dozens of public meetings, multiple votes at City boards, City Council, and our ballot boxes. It will transform an aging, outdated indoor mall into a new neighborhood destination with housing, new streets, new retail and services, more jobs and greater revenue. Throughout the process we have been responsive to City and public concerns and have, at every turn, provided and relied upon a fair presentation of the facts. Mr. Long has not. I trust the public will see the difference.

- Jesse Beck, AIA, NCARB
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