

**Belmont Encouraged To Go Slow On
Demolition of Mill Building. Newmarket
Task Force Undecided**

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DATE: January 31, 1996

PUBLICATION: New Hampshire Union Leader (Manchester, **NH**)

EDITION: State

PAGE: A5

BELMONT - Selectmen are leaning toward adopting a recommendation by Plan **NH** members that the town spend a year looking at funding alternatives before deciding whether to tear down the fire-damaged **Belmont** Mill. Mark Mooney, chairman of the board of selectmen, said that board members were impressed by the Plan **NH** forum held Friday and Saturday concerning possible future uses of the mill, although he wishes that more of the effort had focused on the structure itself.

Three possible scenarios for the **Belmont** Mill were discussed at the two-day workshop with planners, architects and engineers. Those included: * Tearing down the building and cleaning up the site in order to sell it to a private developer.

* Preserving a small building and tower on the site, retaining part of the land as a town center and selling the remainder of the land.

* Restoration of the mill building, including replacing the roof along its original lines, and developing a senior center and day care center on the first two floors and using the top two floors for town offices. Cost estimates were \$77,000 for the first option, \$170,000 for the second option and \$1 million for the third option, with as much as \$700,000 in community development block grant money available for restoration.

Demolition of the four-story main building at the former mill complex was put on hold last September when a citizens group won a court order halting the demolition.

Jeff Taylor, director of the Office of State Planning and one of the participants in the weekend workshop, urged town officials to wait and explore their options before moving ahead with demolition, noting that the three acres which could be developed at the site would be difficult to market at present to a private developer because there is already an abundance of available housing and commercial and industrial property in the area. -----