

PRINCETON PLANNING BOARD

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
Thursday, February 21, 2013**

**PRINCETON - MAIN MEETING ROOM
Princeton, NJ**

PRESENT: Julie Capozzoli, Jenny Crumiller, Wanda Gunning, Bernie Miller, Julie Nachamkin, Timothy Quinn, Marvin Reed, Mildred Trotman, Gail Ullman, Anne Burns (arrived at 7:50 pm)

ABSENT: No one

ALSO PRESENT: Allen Porter, Board Attorney; Gerald Muller, Board Attorney; Lee Solow, Director of Planning; Ilene Cutroneo, Board Secretary; Jack West, Land Use Engineer; Derek Bridger, Zoning Officer

Chairperson Gunning opened the meeting at 7:40 pm, acknowledging the opening statement as required by the Open Public Meetings Act, stating that notice of this meeting was adopted on January 17, 2013 and published on February 1, 2013.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Mr. Reed announced that he was in the process of scheduling a Master Plan Subcommittee meeting for Monday, March 11 at 9:30 am to review the Circulation Element which was prepared in 2012.

MINUTES:

a) Regular Meeting – 10/6/11 – revision. Motion was made by Mrs. Ullman to readopt the minutes with the addition to provide the recommendation and the Board's vote. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Nachamkin and carried with a voice vote of five ayes among those members eligible to vote. No one opposed. No one abstained.

DISCUSSION:

a) Rider University/Westminster Choir College
Courtesy Review
Walnut Lane; Block 31.01, Lot 105
File #P1313-002C

Mr. Reed recused himself from the discussion as he is on the Deans Advisory Committee for Westminster. Mr. Solow was sworn in and provided the Board with some background and an overview of the proposal. The proposed site improvements are primarily located in the central portion of Rider's campus, located in the E-2 zone. The E-2 zone exempts a permitted building from site plan review if the building is located at least 150 feet from the public street. The information provided shows that all proposed buildings and improvements are at least 150 feet from a public street. Rider/Westminster agreed to submit its development proposal to the Board

as a “courtesy review” as the project is exempt from site plan review. Notice was provided to its neighbors using the Board’s procedure for a concept hearing.

Using sheet CE2 – overall sheet (marked as exhibit PB1), Mr. Solow described the proposed improvements to the site:

- Construction of a new 11,790 square foot academic building to connect with the existing playhouse building. The new building will provide space for performances and classrooms. Four new rooms are shown along with storage and additional restrooms. The classrooms provide seating for a variety of functions with the largest room seating approximately 225 and the smallest providing 10 seats.
- The existing playhouse building will be renovated and a 1,492 square foot addition constructed to the west side of the play house. The addition will provide dressing rooms, bathrooms and storage areas.
- A new 1,958 square foot general service building will be constructed east of Talbot library and approximately 158 feet from the rear property line of the homes fronting Linden Lane. This building will house locker rooms, restrooms, a security office, a shop room and be used for general storage.
- The existing parking lots in this area will be reconfigured and new parking area provided near the proposed general service building.
- An underground storm water detention facility will be constructed south of the new academic building. This basin will detain roof run-off from the new academic building and the addition to the play house.
- A number of new sidewalks are proposed to connect the new buildings to existing buildings.
- Additional lighting and landscaping are also proposed.

Sheet SP6 (exhibit PB2) provided the parking plan and it was noted that approximately 26 trees will be removed to facilitate construction. Mr. Solow requested that applicant show that adequate parking has been provided and requested that applicant respond to the Master Plan’s seven principles for institutions in educational zones.

Mark Solomon, Esq. was sworn in and appeared on behalf of the applicant. Robert Annis, Dean of Westminster Choir College was sworn in and provided the Board with background on the existing campus structures and proposed expansion; presented background on the existing campus and reasons for the proposed new building; meeting the needs of the students and the community.

Michael Shakten, AIA, from KSS Architects, was sworn in and reviewed the PowerPoint, made part of the minutes herein (marked as exhibit A1). Mr. Shakten reviewed the green components to be included in the construction and advised that applicant would be applying for LEED silver certification.

Mitchel Ardman, PE was sworn in and reviewed the drainage, fencing and landscaping for the site. Mr. Ardman advised that the building has been located and enhancements provided to limit the visual impact of the development on the surrounding residents. Testimony was presented that the applicant is aware of an ongoing lighting problem from two PSE&G light poles. Michael Recca, Associate Vice President at Rider University, was sworn in and acknowledged the lighting problem. Mr. Recca advised that originally, it was proposed to address the problem lights at time of the complete lighting upgrade, but the applicant has indicated that it would address the immediate problem to eliminate the nuisance to the neighbors. Mr. West indicated that he would provide assistance in working with PSE&G.

Mr. Recca acknowledged that the placement of the fence was not fully decided, although discussed in the prior application. Testimony was presented that the college wants the fence and will provide adequate space adjacent to the surrounding neighbors to provide for maintenance. Questions were also raised regarding the construction staging. Mr. Recca advised that there will be an area on the corner closest to Hamilton Street and this will be used for access into the site as well as the parking of vehicles. The current time frame is to begin construction in July 2013 with an opening in the fall of 2014.

Mrs. Gunning opened the meeting to the public at this time.

Ken Fields, Linden Lane, was sworn in and spoke about the lighting in the parking area that impacts the residents on Linden Lane (photograph of the problem distributed to the Board). Mr. Fields also advised that the neighbors want more planting as a visual shield of the campus. Mrs. Gunning questioned if the lights could be placed on timers. Mr. Recca advised that the lighting needs to be at a certain level for security cameras and cannot be turned off.

Hearing no further comments, public portion was closed. Ms. Crumiller commented on controlling vehicular traffic when the public schools are in session. Mr. Recca advised that he would work with the municipal staff to determine the best access. Mr. Annis advised that his office has an open dialogue with the Board of Education regarding traffic concerns. Mr. Quinn agreed with Mr. Annis. Mr. Quinn questioned if faculty and/or staff reside on campus. Mr. Annis advised the college has 45 full time faculty, 80 adjunct faculty and was uncertain as to the total staff and indicated that, except for him, no faculty or staff members reside on campus.

Mrs. Gunning thanked the college for presenting its upcoming plan. Motion was made by Mrs. Nachamkin to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Crumiller and carried with a voice vote of nine ayes. No one opposed. No one abstained. Meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: 3/11/13

Ilene Cutroneo, Secretary
PLANNING BOARD OF PRINCETON

Adopted: 3/21/13

Wanda S. Gunning, Chair
PLANNING BOARD OF PRINCETON

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