

**PRINCETON PLANNING BOARD**

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING**

**Thursday, July 9, 2015**  
**PRINCETON – Main Meeting Room**  
**Princeton, NJ**

**PRESENT:** Julie Capozzoli, Wanda Gunning, Liz Lempert, Marvin Reed, Fern Spruill, Mildred Trotman, Gail Ullman

**ALTERNATES:** David Cohen

**ABSENT:** Cecilia Birge, Jenny Crumiller, Timothy Quinn

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

Chairperson Gunning opened the meeting at 7:35 pm, acknowledging the opening statement as required by the Open Public Meetings Act, stating that notice of this meeting was adopted on December 6, 2014 and published on December 10, 2014.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Mrs. Gunning advised that the Master Plan Committee has scheduled a meeting on 7/13/15 to review items for the Housing Element.

**FINDINGS OF FACT:**

- a) DIOCESE OF TRENTON – 6/18/15  
Site Plan with conditional use  
Charlton Street; Block 47.02, Lot 15  
File #P1313-038P

Motion was made by Ms. Capozzoli, seconded by Mr. Reed and carried with a voice vote of seven members eligible to vote. No one opposed. No one abstained.

**MINUTES:**

- a) Regular Meeting – January 15, 2015. Motion was made by Mrs. Ullman to accept the minutes as distributed, seconded by Ms. Capozzoli and carried with a voice vote of five ayes among those members eligible to vote. No one opposed. No one abstained.

**HEARINGS:**

Prior to the start of the hearing, Mr. Porter recused himself advising that Palmer Square Management is the landlord for his offices and Karen Cayci, Esq. sat as the Planning Board's special council.

- a) PALMER SQUARE MANAGEMENT, LLC  
Minor Site Plan w/variances  
Block 20.04, Lots 1, 1 CO1 & CO3; Block 20.02, Lot 72; Block 20.01, Lots 82 & 16;  
Block 19.03, Lots 58, 57 & 36  
File #P1414-122PM

Ms. Cayci stated that the notice is acceptable and the board has jurisdiction. Mr. Solow was sworn in and provided an overview of the proposed sign package by reviewing the plan package with the Board. It was noted that most of the signs are replacement and some of the signs were not contemplated by the former Borough ordinance. Of concern to staff was the proposed replacement for the street signs as it is more decorative as opposed to the traditional street signage and it was felt that those types of signs should be compliant with municipal detail.

Thomas Letizia, Esq. was sworn in and appeared on behalf of the applicant. Mr. Letizia advised that 26 of the signs in the booklet received for Board review have been modified. Anita Fresolone, Marketing Manager, Palmer Square Management LLC, was sworn in and advised the Board that Palmer Square is in the process of rebranding and the signage package being presented is to update the look of the development to create a sense of place.

Glen Swantak, Merje Design was sworn in and accepted as a witness. Using a PowerPoint presentation (applicant did not provide the presentation for the file), marked as exhibit A1 and a map showing the sign locations with numbering, marked as exhibit A2, Mr. Swantak reviewed the sign package and advised of the changes as requested by the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC).

Board members questioned some of the proposals: a concern was raised that too many electronic signs are proposed in one area as it was noted that NJ Transit, Tiger Transit and Free B provide information and schedules. Mr. Letizia advised that the applicant would find a mutually agreeable location for the placement of the electronic signage; questions were raised as to the placement and look of the historic board. Ms. Capozzoli advised that HPC established a committee to work with the applicant and are reviewing two locations. Ms. Capozzoli added that the applicant's presentation included all changes requested by HPC. Board members continued to question some of the features described by Mr. Swantak: banners, location of wayfinding for Nassau Inn, color of kiosk signage, non-traditional street sign.

Mr. Swantak advised that only one banner is proposed at the entry point of Palmer Square and the signage colors will be hunter green throughout the development. In response to the wayfinding for the Nassau Inn, it was noted that the Nassau Inn will be shown on the map; concerns were still raised that the map placement did not provide sufficient detail. The applicant advised that it would explore other options; Mr. Solow advised that anything additional would have to return to the Planning Board.

Additional discussion was held by Board members and staff regarding the public street sign at the intersection of Nassau Street and Palmer Square. Concerns were raised by staff that if

the street sign was not the standard sign used in Princeton then the applicant would have to maintain the sign. Staff continued by stating that the sign, poles and lettering are all different than what is used for a Princeton street sign. Staff also raised concern whether the sign meets DOT standards for public street signs.

Chairperson Gunning opened the meeting to the public for comments at this time.

David Newton, was sworn in and advised that Palmer Square was agreeable to work with HPC with the signage. He asked that the amount of time for compliance review with the subcommittees be limited due to the length of time it has taken to get the application to the full Board. Mr. Solow advised that the plans can be packaged to have a joint meeting with HPC and the Landscape Committee to deal with the street sign and interpretive panels.

Public portion was closed. Discussion continued regarding the proposal for a different street sign than those found around Princeton. Board members did not support the different signs, the applicant agreed to leave the existing street sign at this time.

Mrs. Gunning recommended that a specific date be set for the decision by the HPC committee regarding the text for the historic panels. The applicant requested a decision within 90 days. Ms. Capozzoli responded that it was reasonable to have the content by the end of October.

Mr. Letizia requested that should the sign package be approved, that the applicant be allowed to pull permits and build signs but not include the text until approved by HPC's committee and the applicant. The Board had no objections.

Motion was made by Mrs. Trotman to approve the sign package as presented with the conditions as discussed in the reports and during the hearing, seconded by Ms. Capozzoli and carried with the following roll call vote:

FOR: Capozzoli, Lempert, Reed, Spruill, Trotman, Ullman, Gunning, Cohen  
AGAINST: No one  
ABSTAIN: No one

Ms. Capozzoli left the meeting at this time. Ms. Cayci left the meeting and Mr. Porter rejoined the Board.

- b) RAMADGE & MAN  
Minor Subdivision w/variances  
Riverside Drive; Block 8804, Lot 16  
File #P1515-161MS

Mr. Solow was sworn in and provided the Board with an overview. Using the subdivision sheet from the submission (marked as exhibit PB1), Mr. Solow advised that the applicant was

seeking to subdivide a conforming lot into two nonconforming lots. Proposed lot 16.01 will be 19,937.2 sf contain the existing dwelling and proposed lot 16.02 will be 19,509.2 sf and with the future construction of a new dwelling.

Mrs. Ullman questioned why a site plan approval was being presented for the subdivision application. Mr. Solow advised that the architect prepared the plans as the applicant is seeking bulk variances for both lots along with a height to set back variance as a solar installation will be part of the construction of the new dwelling.

Christopher Tarr, Esq., was sworn in and appeared on behalf of the applicant. Peter Ramadge, property owner; Kirsten Thoft, architect; and James Chmielak, PE were sworn in as witnesses. Using a PowerPoint presentation (marked as exhibit A1) Mr. Ramadge explained that he and his wife are looking for a home where they can age in place. He reviewed the proposed application, discussed the requested variances and noted the homes in the area that have the same variance as being requested by this application. Testimony was also presented that the design preserves existing trees and allows for the construction of a smaller home with solar panels. It was noted that if a subdivision was not created, the new owner could tear down the existing home and build a house twice the size that is currently on the lot.

Ms. Thoft was accepted as an expert witness and advised that the size of the house needs to be compact to maximize solar gain and the applicant is proposing as many features as possible to be sustainable.

Mr. Chmielak was accepted as an expert witness presenting testimony on the special reasons to grant the variances being requested. Mr. Chmielak stated that the proposal benefits the public good and the benefits outweigh the detriments. In addition, testimony was presented that the subdivision furthers the goals of the Princeton Community Master Plan for sustainability, energy conservation and aging in place.

There was discussion by the applicant regarding the condition that the three large trees on lot two be preserved to prevent construction infringing on the dripline. In addition, the construction of the driveway and the garage will be determined by the arborist so as not to cause harm to any of the trees. Board members expressed concern regarding the variance being requested for the height to set back variance and why the greater variance is being requested when the design does not require it. Ms. Thoft advised that the design of the house was not yet engineered and if the placement does not work then the applicant would have to rotate the footprint.

Discussion took place among Board members that limitations should be placed on the existing and new lots to control the height to set back ratio variance and limiting the FAR constructed. Concerns were also raised that should the existing house be sold and torn down, a larger home can be constructed which would be much larger than currently exists.

Chairperson Gunning opened the meeting to public comment at this time.

Lawrence Pfeiffer, 28 Longview, was sworn in and requested that the staff condition be imposed regarding the dripline.

Selina Man, Riverside Drive, property owner was sworn in and advised at the time of the original purchase she and her husband decided on purchasing a double lot and always had the intent to construct another dwelling in the future.

Hearing no further comments, the public portion was closed. Mrs. Gunning asked for comments from the Board on this time. The Board members continued to express concern regarding the size of a future house and height to setback ratio variance and a way to limit the coverage on the lots. It was recommended that after the house is built on proposed lot 16.02, the permitted setback to height ratio along proposed lot 16.01 be established as the variance and should the house on 16.02 be demolished, the variance would be terminated.

Motion was made by Mrs. Ullman to approve the subdivision with the conditions discussed during the hearing and those in staff reports, seconded by Mr. Reed and carried with the following roll call vote:

FOR: Lempert, Reed, Spruill, Trotman, Ullman, Gunning, Cohen

AGAINST: No one

ABSTAIN: No one

Motion was made by Mrs. Trotman to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Spruill and carried with a voice vote of eight ayes. Meeting adjourned at 10:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: 2/26/16

Ilene Cutroneo, Board Secretary  
PRINCETON PLANNING BOARD

Approved: 4/7/16

Wanda Gunning, Chairperson  
PRINCETON PLANNING BOARD