

**Municipality of Princeton
SITE PLAN REVIEW ADVISORY BOARD**

NOTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING

**Wednesday, January 12, 2022
Zoom Webinar ID # 837 2689 0258
Princeton, New Jersey**

PRESENT: Louisa Clayton, David Cohen, Steven Firestone, Ingela Kostenbader, Lisa Marcus Levine, Anne Soos, Barbara Simpson Vadnais, Marina Rubina

ALTERNATES: None

ABSENT: Robert Freudenberg

ALSO PRESENT: James Purcell, Land Use Engineer; Derek Bridger, Zoning Officer; Michael La Place, Planning Director; Justin Lesko, Senior Planner; Miya Davis, Planning Secretary.

OPENING STATEMENT

Chairperson Clayton called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. and read the Opening Statement as required by the Open Public Meetings Act, acknowledging that notice of this meeting was issued on the 6th day of January 2021.

APPLICATIONS

- a) Trustees of Princeton University
Preliminary and Final Site Plan for Dillon Gym Expansion
Between Pyne Drive and Elm Drive; Block 45.01, Lot 101
File #P2121-090P
MLUL Deadline: 1/23/22

Representatives for the applicant: Christopher DeGrazia, Esq.; Ronald McCoy, University Architect, Princeton University; Christian Roche, PE, LEED AP, Langan.

The applicant is seeking preliminary and final site plan approval for the Dillon Gymnasium and associated site improvements for the project site.

Christopher DeGrazia, attorney for the applicant, introduced the application for his client then introduced Ronald McCoy, University Architect. Mr. McCoy shared a presentation on the application, covering topics including plans, sustainable strategies, and tree removal and planting. Christian Roche, the engineering consultant for the applicant, described the plans for stormwater management and design.

Chairperson Clayton asked if the buildings were going to be LEED certified. Mr. McCoy stated yes, they are targeting LEED Gold certification.

Chairperson Clayton stated to the applicant when they typically take down trees, they do not replace them all on-site. Mr. McCoy stated all of the trees would be on-site.

Member Cohen stated he loved the materials palette.

Member Cohen asked about the new entrance on Elm Drive and its design. Mr. McCoy stated structural conditions prevented a broader opening in that area. Mr. McCoy stated that the design fits because it is prominent, but not too loud. Member Cohen thanked Mr. McCoy for walking through the design process.

Vice-Chair Marcus Levine asked why the seating is tucked in, away from sunlight. Mr. McCoy stated there is seating in the shade, center, and outside perimeter of the building. Mr. McCoy stated ADA-parking is located at a safe distance from the pedestrian crossing.

Vice-Chair Marcus Levine thanked Mr. McCoy for including sustainability in the project.

Mr. DeGrazia stated they have recently requested a sign variance.

Michael La Place, Director of Planning, asked for the University to be more specific about the location and area of the sign when coming to the Planning Board.

Mr. La Place stated that the tower is a landmark, but it is on the sideline of the project. He asked whether there was any consideration to using the tower as the entrance. Mr. McCoy stated it is an ADA nightmare and a very congested area.

Based on the foregoing, a motion was made by D. Cohen to recommend approval of the application as a preliminary and final major site plan with the recommendations described below. The motion was seconded by L. Marcus Levine.

Vote on motion:

For: Clayton, Cohen, Firestone, Kostenbader, Marcus Levine, Vadnais
Against: None
Abstain: None

MINUTES

Chairperson Clayton stated they would vote on the minutes. She stated that this would be a voice vote of those eligible to vote.

- a) October 13, 2021 – Regular Meeting (carried from 12/8/21) Motion to approve the meeting minutes of October 13, 2021, and carried by a voice vote of those eligible to vote (5-0).
- b) October 6, 2021 – Special Workshop (carried from 12/8/21) Motion to approve the meeting minutes of October 6, 2021, and carried by a voice vote of those eligible to vote (5-0).

- c) September 22, 2021 – Regular Meeting (carried from 12/8/21) Motion to approve the meeting minutes of October 22, 2021, and carried by a voice vote of those eligible to vote (5-0).
- d) September 9, 2020 – Regular Meeting (carried from 12/8/21) Motion to approve the meeting minutes of October 13, 2021, and carried by a voice vote of those eligible to vote (3-0).
- e) December 8, 2021 – Regular Meeting carried to next meeting.

APPLICATIONS

- b) Simplify Living, Inc.
Minor Site Plan
39 Linden Lane; Block 33.03, Lot 69
File #P2121-007PM
MLUL Deadline: 2/5/22

Representatives for the applicant: Ryan Kennedy, Esq.; James Chmielak, PE, PP; Akash Ghulyani, Simplify Living, Inc.

The applicant is seeking a minor site plan approval for 39 Linden Lane and associated site improvements for the project site.

Member Kostenbader and Vice-Chairperson Marcus Levine recused themselves at 8:37 pm.

Member Rubina joined at 8:46 pm.

Ryan Kennedy, attorney for the applicant, introduced the application for his client and also introduced James Chmielak, engineer for the applicant. Mr. Chmielak shared a presentation on the application, covering topics including plans, stormwater, parking, landscape, and plantings. Akash Ghulyani, representative for Simplify Living, Inc, described the green elements of the building, renderings, and plans.

Member Cohen referenced the Humbert Street Simplify Living project and asked if there were requirements for the lot to be front on the street. Mr. Kennedy stated there are provisions within neighborhood character requirements and noted this was based on the interpretation that these were attached dwellings. Mr. Kennedy stated based on the provisions this was also why they submitted originally as multiple dwellings.

Chairperson Clayton asked whether the cars would back out of the driveway or turn around. Mr. Chmielak stated they would back out of the driveway, similar to other residents within the neighborhood. Chairperson Clayton asked if the applicant looked into the car being able to turn around. Mr. Chmielak stated to do a large parking area would decrease the open space and increase impervious coverage.

Member Cohen asked why was the access easement being terminated. Mr. Kennedy stated he was surprised when using the easement, it would be a larger use of impervious coverage. Mr. Kennedy stated the applicant tried several designs to figure out how to use the easement. Mr. Kennedy stated there was no way to turn cars at that angle. Chairperson Clayton stated it did not make sense to use the driveway, not on their lot. Chairperson Clayton stated they could have had the cars come in and make a left to park and back out and go forward out the shared driveway. Chairperson Clayton stated it would have saved a lot of impervious coverage. Mr. Ghulyani stated it would be tight to turn around. Mr. Chmielak stated they want to maintain the impervious coverage and stay within the thresholds.

Chairperson Clayton stated that they would reduce impervious coverage by only parking the cars and using the shared driveway. Chairperson Clayton also stated it would be safer for the driver because they could back out and go on to Linden Lane going forward. She said she worried about the cars backing out a long-distance and navigating the post for the overhung balconies. Mr. Kennedy stated that they would look at it and use it as a comparison to show that it does not work in the layout to the Planning Board.

Chairperson Clayton stated the applicant should put units A & B together and separate unit C. She also mentioned unit C should be placed in the rear to allow parking in between the units. Chairperson Clayton stated this would be a safer alternative and decrease impervious coverage.

Member Cohen stated the applicant could change the footprint of the building, making it less deep and a little bit wider. He mentioned this would allow for maneuvering space.

Mr. Kennedy stated they had explored Chairperson Clayton's plan with separating the buildings. Mr. Kennedy stated they looked into parking between the building. He mentioned they would present the options that did not work to the Planning Board.

Mr. Kennedy asked if the project was not counted as an attached dwelling matter instead of sticking to the artificial set of rules. Chairperson Clayton stated that since there is no actual road there, she sees it as odd in the middle of a residential neighborhood to turn the lot in a different direction.

Chairperson Clayton stated if this application goes through, people in the future would believe that they could turn the lot frontage too.

Chairperson Clayton also mentioned the applicant could instead turn it into a multiple dwelling and they would have fewer variances.

Member Cohen stated they should be looking at the accessory dwelling unit ordinance. Member Cohen stated the units would be a little smaller. Member Cohen mentioned they could do a standard duplex facing Linden Lane, do a free-standing duplex in the rear, and use the existing driveway. Member Cohen stated this would cut back on variances. Mr. Kennedy stated the ADU only works for a single-family and not a duplex. Derek Bridger, Zoning Officer, stated yes, Mr. Kennedy was correct.

Chairperson Clayton stated they could make condominiums and sell them separately. Mr. Kennedy responded yes. Chairperson Clayton stated that unit A could get a lot with a front yard, unit B gets the middle, and unit C gets everything to the rear, including open space for everyone. Mr. Kennedy stated that they are not splitting the lot and designated areas.

Member Cohen asked whether he had a planning testimony on why the variances should be granted. Member Cohen mentioned the applicant is using this site intensely; they need to understand the benefits and detriments are. Mr. Kennedy stated Jim Chmielak is a planner, and yes he could give a testimony to the Planning Board. Mr. Kennedy noted this is supportable from a C2 and C1 variance standard.

Member Vadnais asked could you address stormwater and how the dry well would work. Mr. Chmielak stated the dry well would manage the retention of water from the roof area. Member Vadnais asked whether they could use green infrastructure on this site. Mr. Chmielak stated they have two components: water quality swale with native plantings.

Member Vadnais asked where does the dry well runs off. Mr. Chmielak stated that it would flow off the property according to its existing conditions. Member Vadnais asked would there be more water. Mr. Chmielak stated it would be less because the dry well would be managing that increase from the development.

Member Rubina asked Mr. Bridger if multiple buildings were not allowed on this site. Mr. Bridger stated it is a definition of attached dwelling that meets the ordinance, and a multiple dwelling means units on top of another.

Member Rubina asked if there is a way to do separate buildings without causing a variance. Mr. Bridger stated there are some variances.

Member Rubina stated that she recommended the applicant put three lots on the property. Member Rubina stated that municipal zoning requirements push people to comply with ordinances that do not make sense. Member Cohen stated they could do multiple dwellings without any issues.

Member Cohen stated he had a concern the middle unit does not have a path to get to it.

Member Clayton asked whether they could have a separate building in the back. Mr. Cohen stated no.

Mr. Kennedy stated these constraints came up in their process and that arrangement results in a bulk variance. Mr. Kennedy stated he hoped that the Planning Board could grant it. Mr. Kennedy stated they could get support for multiple unit projects or a duplex with an ADU.

Michael La Place, Planning Director, stated he would like to have seen a design that went with the design of the neighborhood.

Chairperson Clayton stated from a design standpoint that she would prefer a more prominent building in the front and a smaller building in the back to fit with the neighborhood and allow for a safer parking situation.

Member Rubina stated the applicants followed the ordinance, which is how they got to this design. Member Rubina stated they could have put two buildings and would have not needed to go to the Planning Board. She thanked them for adding more needed housing.

Member Vadnais stated that she would like to see one building, more control of stormwater, and more options for green infrastructure. She stated multiply dwelling units are a great idea; each unit would have one floor, so there are no stairs to deal with.

Member Cohen stated that the applicant should look at the flag lots for design elements.

Mr. La Place asked whether the applicant looked into the extension of Spruce Lane in the rear of the lot. Mr. Kennedy stated that he was unaware of that possibility since the lot was far in.

Mr. La Place stated that the applicant should show the west elevation and how it fits with the streetscape during the Planning Board meeting.

Member Cohen stated he does not encourage the applicant to go in this direction. Member Cohen stated the conversation was too complicated to make a recommendation besides not approving this design.

Chairperson Clayton stated they could not make a decision tonight. Mr. Kennedy stated they would take the Board's comments and reflect on them.

Member Cohen stated it be great if they could save the oak tree.

REORGANIZATION

- a. Nominating Committee Report
- b. Election of Officers
 1. Nomination and Appointment of Chairperson

Motion was made by Member Firestone to appoint Chairperson Clayton as Chairperson. The motion was seconded by Member Cohen. The vote was 5-0 in favor of those eligible to vote.

2. Nomination and Appointment of Vice-Chairperson

Motion was made by Member Firestone to reappoint Vice-Chairperson Marcus Levine as Vice-Chairperson. The motion was seconded by Chairperson Clayton. The vote was 5-0 in favor of those eligible to vote.

- c. 2022 Calendar

- d. Appointment of SPRAB Secretary
- e. Fixed Charges for Meeting Notices
- f. Special Charges

A motion was made by Member Cohen to approve the four resolutions. The motion was seconded by Member Firestone. The vote was 6-0 in favor.

DISCUSSION

Discussion of the Ordinance to Disband SPRAB #2022-01

Member Cohen recused himself from the discussion at 9:35.

Member Soos joined at 9:38 pm.

Chairperson Clayton expressed concerns in regards to the disbandment of SPRAB. Chairperson Clayton stated she believes SPRAB is a valuable service to the town. Ms. Clayton stated that staff jobs are to make sure the applicant is compliant and not to look at the design details of the project like SPRAB.

Member Soos expressed her concerns with the disbandment of SPRAB. She stated now with SPRAB possible ending it would be up to staff to take on the role of SPRAB.

Member Vadnais expressed her concerns about SPRAB and how being from the Stormwater Commission, SPRAB has given them a chance to speak with the applicant. She also stated that she is happy that SPRAB is an advisory board to give suggestions for improving the projects.

Member Rubina expressed her disappointment in SPRAB and how it does not work the way it is supposed to. Member Rubina noted that SPRAB is set up is too late for the applicants. She also stated their time has been disrespected by giving reports too late to revise projects before their Planning Board hearings. Member Rubina stated that an advisory board should meet with them at the beginning and the end of the project. She also stated that in the future there should be a checklist given to applicants to cover topics at the new advisory board meeting.

Vice-Chairperson Marcus Levine expressed her concerns. She stated she agreed with Member Rubina and that SPRAB was late in the process and hopes whatever comes next can meet with the applicant earlier. She also mentioned SPRAB gives a whole new layer to the process than staff.

With no further business before the Board, motion was made by Member Vadnais and seconded by Vice-Chairperson Marcus Levine, to adjourn the meeting at 10:30 PM.

NOTE: THESE MINUTES WERE APPROVED ADMINISTRATIVELY ON FEBRUARY 2, 2022 AFTER THE DISBANDMENT OF SPRAB VIA COUNCIL ORDINANCE #2022-1 ON JANUARY 24, 2022.

Respectfully submitted,

Miya Davis
Secretary