

Town of Watertown
Planning and Zoning Commission
Special Meeting
Public Hearing
Judson Elementary School
February 20, 2008

**Continuation of public hearing Special Permit #234 Judson School,
Watertown, CT Site Plan Modifications for an educational use with
additions and renovations located at the Judson School, 124
Hamilton Lane, Watertown, Ct.**

Minnich: Next on the agenda is Judson School.

Joseph DiCarlo – Landscape Architect – Kaestle Boos Associates

Once burned twice learned we have half sized plans for Judson. Representing the Board of Education again we made our presentation at the opening hearing awhile ago. As a refresher I have placed a colored site plan on the easel here just to guide us. We have appeared again before Wetlands and the Zoning Board of Appeals and received their approvals for the projects and the variances that we sought. And to that end we are here to take your questions?

Minnich: Does any members of the Commission have any questions on this project?

Blais: Yes are you adding a lot more parking places to that school? How many roughly?

DiCarlo: It is roughly double, I believe we are somewhere up in the 70 or 80 cars. I can point out to you on the plan right now there is one parking lot there we have got three now plus the visitor parking in front of the building.

Blais: Where I go to vote there, this last time 10 spaces reserved for voters when they voted on the referendum to approve this school renovation there was four and there was breakfast that morning at Judson School for parents, I never seen so many cars in my life it just plugged up that whole lot. What's the faculty and employees at that school?

DiCarlo: Also have you got the number in front of you on 95.

Blais: You have 70 parking places and 95 employees.

DiCarlo: No. 95 parking places.

LoFrese: There are currently 40 to 45 employees. And that would be anticipated even after construction.

Blais: Why don't they park in the North parking lot? That North parking lot is at least 50% empty every day and they like to park on the grass in the front of the school so they don't have to walk as far. You go there any day that faculty parking lot on the North side of that school is half empty. And there are cars all over the grass in the front. And people are lazy to walk.

Dupliese: Yes but it will all be curbed now. So you will not drive up on the grass you will drive up over 7 inch curb.

LoFrese: There is also a wooden guard rail that is being installed along Hamilton Avenue to prevent cars from doing just that.

Minnich: Is there any members of the Commission have any further comments? I have a couple along the same lines. I would expect the same response once again there are some many sidewalks are concrete sidewalks there are some that are asphalt and those are continued in the plans to be asphalt and once again they don't conform with our regulations. Also on the front of the school near the bus loop you added sidewalks along front of the school however there is a small area near the bus loop to which are

sidewalks and that are not shown in the plans. Is that just an oversight or was that a design that sidewalk would end and be several feet of what there is now and then the sidewalks continue?

DiCarlo: The original design intent why that piece was missing was simply that this visitor parking they would go across to the front of the school or during events on the athletic fields that might park there and walk, so the walk headed down that way it was felt that to conform with requirements of getting a walk across the front of the school people could walk by the parking space and loop up by the school and back down. Staff pointed out that was not logical as we said everyone is lazy that piece of walk has been added so now there is a walk across the front of the site.

Minnich: The parking what is the latest proposal or final proposal and we will hopefully conclude this but what is the final proposal for the parking down near the athletic fields along Hamilton Lane what is the scope proposing in this project?

DiCarlo: At this point the only thing that is being added down there is the walk that will run through that area where the cars are parked now.

Minnich: And that is on your side of the street that sidewalk?

DiCarlo: And in fact if you are familiar with it, there is a wire and fence and it will be just outside that fence running over to the intersection of Hamilton Avenue and Hamilton Lane.

Minnich: I know this is minor but the two landscaped areas islands that are both in the small round one that's in the parent drop off as well as the one that's in the bus loop in reviewing that the landscaping in, that doesn't conform so no doubt will look to getting plantings in those sort of things but anyway. Chuck there is some comments that you have regarding we have gotten to the point where it is beyond my expertise here.

Berger: At previous Commission meetings you received the January 23rd memo from myself, I have received revised plans and yesterday I

generated a memo dated February 19th which I believe you handed out this evening. I will just go over some of the again what I titled major issues but these issues that I think that I ought to bring to your attention. The first one being again some additional clarification on the athletic fields and the treatments there what alternatives are being considered? I have received the cross section of the athletic fields but it does not appear to be consistent with the recommendations contained in the geotechnical reports. I would suggest they move forward with that issue be resolved to the satisfaction of the Town Engineer and Land Use Administrator.

The other two issues that I want to bring to your attention, I also received the revised storm drainage analysis and it appears that there was a number of changes made to that. I believe the previous one was designed based on a 10 year design storm for the storm drainage system in the parking lots and on site drainage. When it was revised to meet the town standards of 25 year there were a number of changes that occurred and I need to have the opportunity to review all those changes with the Civil Site Engineer there are several instances within the new parking areas that I believe increased because we are now designing for the 25 year storm we have fairly significant ponding areas around the catch basins in the new parking areas that need to be resolved.

The last issue is probably an easy answer the temporary sediment trap that was shown on the erosion control plans was in the upland review area has been relocated I assumed under a revised plan?

DiCarlo: That is correct. Yes.

Berger: There are other issues in my memo but those are the ones that I would like to highlight to the Commission.

Minnich: I just have a few more. Could you help me to appreciate how you are going to access the loading dock? How that is going to work with truck going in there?

DiCarlo: The way the access is they drive in here the loading dock is in on grade loading door will pull into here and back up here they will then have to pull up back in here and drive back out again.

Minnich: I did not understand the backing procedure. I knew that it would be difficult with the normal process of doing that.

DiCarlo: And that begins to get into that driveway width thing we got into trouble with.

Minnich: I would like to read into the record a Watertown Police Commission of our meeting on February 19th 2008 of a motion by Judy Pilicy and seconded by Patricia Kropp that a motion to keep Hamilton Lane a two way lane provided that as part of the Judson School Project the exit from the parent turn around will be a right turn only onto Hamilton Lane. Discussion was none all in favor it was unanimous by a vote of 4 to nothing. That is what the Police Commission position is on the issue of the road as we talked about last time and time before.
Chuck have we received for our review a traffic signage plan in this project.

Berger: I did receive drive plans this afternoon which I have not opened I am not sure if there is a signage in there or not.

DiCarlo: It should be in there if it is not we can certainly correct that but there is a signage plan developed or being developed.

Minnich: Chuck is there any signage modifications to the sign that is at Judson School?

Berger: Not that I am aware of.

Minnich: And you have said before regarding the both variances you gotten from ZBA with regards to those that are abutting the residential neighborhoods you would have no problems with us a condition

requiring shrubbery and appropriate to that in those areas adjacent to the parking lots to screen that from the ...

DiCarlo: In fact they are on the plans you have before you today. That was one of the reasons why we wanted to resubmit was that the screen plants have been added.

Minnich: Is there any comments from members of the Commission before the public?

Are there any comments from the members of the public on this Judson School project? Hearing none any last comments from members of the Commission?

Dupliese: I know we have talked about these sidewalks here I have 2 things I would like to point out and in the past I did a lot of work for industrial and asphalt concrete comparison to concrete sidewalks typically asphalt concrete somewhere between 2 to 3 dollars a square foot and concrete sidewalks for the private sector was somewhere around 22 dollars a square foot. I know that's not what the school system pays for when they go out to bid so it is a lot more expensive to go to concrete than it is to go to asphalt that is number one.

Number two is there islands in the 3 driveways entering and exiting. I don't know what they are made out of but I know knocking down the asphalt sidewalks I don't think are a major issue but these islands are going to get knocked out the first plow that comes in. You have one driveway that actually has 2 islands that are broken. And the other 2 driveways each have an island I don't think those will last more than the first good snow storm. I don't know what you are making them out of? If something is going to be made out of concrete I would say those 3 or 4 islands should be made out of concrete rather than bituminous asphalt.

Minnich: Any other comments from members of the Commission? Hearing none it is our practice to ask the applicant if you have any final comments to make on this project.

DiCarlo: Not at this time no.

Martin: I am looking at here that is just looks a little funky I believe that the students drop off that loop that comes around the way that it is depicted here between the sidewalk and the island it gets awful narrow does it?

DiCarlo: It was wider and staff engineering members recommended that we narrow it.

Martin: Would I be able to get around there and get out?

DiCarlo: There is no doubt about it. It is a double width so that a car can stop and another one can get by it. So it is at least 24 feet wide if a tight turn. There is no doubt about it.

Martin: You are curving into the turn.

DiCarlo: That is correct and it was wider and as I said we were told to narrow it down. It is wide enough for a vehicle to get through certainly. You could not get two through at a time.

Minnich: Are there any other comments from the members of the Commission? Hearing none.

Masyada: A motion to close the public hearing.

Minnich: Is there a second?

Dupliese: Second

Minnich: Is there any further discussion? All those in favor please say I all opposed say no. Motion carries unanimously.

Text of motion to close public hearing. Motion made by M. Masayda and seconded by G. Dupliese. All in favor and none opposed.

Michael Masayda
Secretary
