

PRINCETON TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING

January 31, 2011

A special joint meeting of Township Committee and Borough Council was held on this date at 7:00 p.m. in the main meeting room of the Princeton Township Municipal Complex, 400 Witherspoon Street to discuss the Princeton University Arts and Transit Village.

NOTICE OF MEETING

The Clerk read the following statement.

The following is an accurate statement concerning the providing of notice of this meeting and said statement shall be entered in the minutes of this meeting. Notice of this meeting as required by Sections 4a, 3d, 13 and 14 of the Open Public Meetings Act has been provided to the public in the form of a written notice. On January 18, 2011 at 1:30 p.m., said notice was posted on the official bulletin board in the Municipal Building, transmitted to the Princeton Packet, the Trenton Times, the Trentonian, the Town Topics, and filed with the Township Clerk.

ROLL CALL

The Township Clerk then called the roll.

Present: Mayor Goerner and Mesdames Lempert and Nemeth and Messrs. Liverman and Miller.

Absent: None.

The Borough Clerk called the roll for Princeton Borough.

Present: Mayor Trotman, and Mesdames Butler, Crumiller, and Trelstad, and Messrs. Goldfarb, Martindell and Wilkes.

Absent: None.

Princeton University Arts and Transit Village

Mr. Goldfarb recused himself from the discussion.

Robert Durkee, and Kristen Appelget, Princeton University provided to Township Committee and Borough Council a power point presentation detailing "An Arts and Transit Neighborhood that Meets University and Community Needs".

Princeton University President Shirley Tilghman said that this meeting represents a watershed moment on this project that has been in discussion for over four years. She said that she had an obligation to the students who came to the University believing that they were in the midst of a significant expansion in opportunities to pursue their passions for the creative and performing arts.

Ms. Tilghman said to the governing bodies that after they have heard the presentation and they conclude that they would not be willing to go forward to put the zoning in place, than she would instruct her colleagues the next morning to begin planning for another site.

The proposed location allows for convenient public access to the arts and asked that the governing bodies put the appropriate zoning in place. She said that this is a go or no go moment and the University needs to know if they are going forward with the project. President Tilghman said that the University has a high stake in the Dinky and share the commitment to preserve the Dinky. She said to the governing bodies that if the highest priority is to save the Dinky, than the surest way is to approve this plan.

Mr. Wilkes said that even if the plan were given a go ahead, there was no guarantee offered by New Jersey Transit or The Department of Transportation to preserve the Dinky as is.

Ms. Trelstad said that she saw the meeting as a first step in the formal approval process and would like to continue the discussions. Mayor Trotman echoed Ms. Trelstad's concerns.

Mr. Martindell said that he thought that it was a false choice, to either accept the proposal as it comes before them, or to abandon the Arts and Transit Neighborhood altogether.

Mayor Goerner said that it appeared that an unfortunate circumstance has been created and he called for a continued dialogue with the ability to move forward with some compromise.

Ms. Nemeth said that she was leaning toward favoring the project even if it meant moving the Dinky. She said that she was very conflicted. Ms. Nemeth said that she loved the arts and transit proposal but didn't love the transit proposal.

Mr. Liverman called for a timeline to be set for further discussions. Mr. Miller agreed with Mr. Liverman.

Among those present from the community, there many who spoke in favor of the project, offered support for the arts center. The main issue of contention was moving the Dinky.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 11:20 p.m.

Linda S. McDermott
Township Clerk