



## *Princeton University*

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To: Members of the Planning Board  
From: Bob Durkee  
Subject: Arts and Transit Site Plan Approval

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With the Township having enacted its AET zone and Borough having enacted its E-5 zone, the University is currently in the process of preparing its Arts and Transit project for submission to the Planning Board for site plan approval. The purpose of this communication is to provide you with a brief update on recent developments regarding the project.

As some of you will recall, the University first presented its campus plan to the Planning Board in March of 2006. That presentation included the early stages of the Arts and Transit proposal. Over subsequent years, and especially this past year, we have had numerous opportunities to discuss the concepts behind our Arts and Transit project with you and with other members of the community. In these presentations, we have outlined the goals of the plan; described its basic elements, both in phase one and in possible future phases; and enumerated the ways in which we have tried to achieve objectives of the community master plan. Over the course of these discussions we have made adjustments to the plan, and in recent weeks we have made further adjustments to accommodate specific requirements in the new zoning ordinances and to reflect both suggestions from members of the community and the more detailed design that can be done now that zoning is in place to allow us to proceed with the project.

I am enclosing a sketch of the layout as it will appear in the submission we hope to make later this spring. As you will see, all of the basic elements of the plan remain: the roadway improvements, including the roundabout at Alexander and University Place; the new train station incorporating the Wawa and the associated transit plaza and parking; the driveway into the Lot 7 garage; the conversion of the existing station buildings into a restaurant and café; extensive landscaping; and, of course, the first phase arts buildings and public plaza designed by Stephen Holl.

You will see that the location and orientation of the Stephen Holl buildings have been shifted a bit to the south and the buildings themselves have been repositioned on the site. These modifications allow us to meet zoning requirements, but they also respond to some community concerns about whether the site will be sufficiently open and accessible to members of the community. The

relocation and reorientation also respond to community interest in making sure that the site can accommodate possible future mass transit options by introducing greater flexibility in the area near the roundabout north of the first phase academic buildings. The modified design also improves walking paths from Forbes College to the campus (increasing the likelihood that these paths will be utilized); provides a greater sense of connectedness between the first-phase arts buildings and the transit area (by increasing the orientation of the buildings toward the transit plaza and the station building); significantly improves traffic patterns and short-term parking options in the transit plaza; and reserves the possibility of a later-phase building at some point in the future on the site between the Stephen Holl buildings and University Place.

The one other development that I would like to bring to your attention is the designation of the architect whom we have engaged to design the new station building and the renovation of the existing station buildings. Rick Joy is one of the leading young American architects, with a practice that is known for its thoughtful and creative use of space, light, and materials. He is the recipient of the 2002 American Academy of Arts and Letters Award in Architecture and in 2004 he won the prestigious National Design Award. He has served as a visiting professor at the Harvard Graduate School of Design, Rice University, MIT, and the University of Arizona. He has previous experience designing train stations and retail space and in university settings, and he has an excellent working relationship with Stephen Holl. We are very pleased that he is willing to devote his own talents and those of his firm to designing this key element of our overall arts and transit plan. When we submit our project for site plan approval we expect to include his plans for both the new station building and the renovation of the existing buildings.

If you have any questions at this point we would be pleased to try to answer them. We look forward to appearing before you later this year when our application is ready for your review.



Princeton University  
Arts and Transit Neighborhood

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