

## Where will Princeton be in 20 Years?

Some of the comments made during a discussion of Princeton's future on Saturday, 20 May 2017

### A statement affirmed

*Looking ahead for 20-30 years, Princeton Future foresees more technological changes in how we live. While protecting our traditional residential neighborhoods and commercial districts, we have identified 25 sites where the Princeton Zoning Code should provide for increased density, mixed use, open space, economical construction, public transit, decreased parking requirements, public-private off-street shared parking, and more variety and choice of housing, affordable to low, moderate, middle income families and individuals.*

**Heidi Fichtenbaum AIA:** We need a new approach to reducing utility costs: For everything that comes out of this session, we need a vision of **net zero CO2 development**. It means, for everyone, you pay less for utilities. You can't begin to think about growing, urbanizing without addressing energy and how we are going to address climate change. Also, I just want to say that as we plan for complete streets, **storm water** is very important to a green strategy.

**Kirsten Thoft AIA:** **Developers build what they are allowed to build. What do you want them to build is the question?** It is not what do you not want. It is like playing whack-a-mole, right? If you don't like that then you are going to get something else. But what is it that you want? I consider myself a responsible developer. I am an architect with LEED certification. But that doesn't mean I get to build two houses in the township on one lot, even though it is more sustainable and can produce more affordable housing and a mix of smaller houses. Duplexes?...We

**Dr. Tom Davidson:** It is not just we 425 members who use this facility [Springdale Golf Club]. Students and townsfolk go for walks on the golf course [when it is not in use]. They [Princeton University] have helped us financially. They have communicated to us that there are many ways they continue to value us as a venue for their golf team but also for their faculty and their students who play there. So these rumors that are flying around town about buying Jasna Polana or building a Law School or Medical School there, or selling to Toll Brothers, we just ...although they have the right to do that...by the way the licensing agreement expires in 2036, not 2026. Although there is a clause there that does give them the right to evict us in 2026. We believe it is going to be a golf club for much more than 10 years...and after that...I can't believe they are going to sell it. **When I look at that property, the word 'priceless' comes to mind.** They will continue to own and maintain it, at least partly as open space.

**PATRICIA FERNANDEZ-KELLY PHD:** I REALLY WANT TO IMPRESS ON YOU THAT **THERE IS A LOT OF FRUSTRATION AT OUR TABLE BECAUSE, AS KATHERINE TOLD US, MANY PEOPLE FEEL SILENT. THEY FEEL THEY ARE NOT COMMUNICATING WITH THE PLANNING BOARD, WITH THE CITY GOVERNMENT, AND WITH THE AUTHORITIES IN THE EDUCATION WORLD. SO THAT EVERYBODY SEEMS TO BE DOING SOMETHING THAT IS NOT GENERATING A UNIFIED PRINCETON VISION. SO WE CAN TALK ABOUT DENSITY...ABOUT SMALL CARBON FOOTPRINT AND ABOUT HOW TO IMPROVE PARKS AND HOW TO CREATE ALL KINDS OF IMPROVEMENTS, BUT UNLESS THERE IS A SOMEWHAT SHARED VISION, UNLESS THERE ARE BETTER WAYS FOR THE CITIZENRY TO COMMUNICATE WITH GOVERNMENT, WE WILL CONTINUE TO HAVE MEETINGS LIKE THIS...WHICH I VERY MUCH LOOK FORWARD TO!**

\_\_\_\_\_: There has been a lot of conversation by City Council to the effect that for every affordable unit we will need to build 5 market units. **But that is not the case.** When any non-profit or the Municipality develops housing it can be totally affordable as long as the financing can be obtained. We do not have to build massive numbers of market apartments.

**David Kinsey PhD:** There are several ways to build affordable housing. One is 100% affordable. More conventional is private sector building 4 units market rate and one affordable. That is what Montgomery Township is complaining that it will have to do. But there are other solutions, as well, that Princeton has even used. At Griggs Farms, there is a 50% 'set-aside'. A mix of for-sale and rentals.... **And I think it fair to say that we touched most of those topics and that there is broad agreement for most of those concerns: particularly the idea of increased density, more variety and choices of housing types.**

\_\_\_\_\_: I have a town-wide proposal. I would like to introduce a concept. It is called **intercept parking**. It is used all over Europe. The idea is that you protect the historical core of your beautiful city by encouraging people to park outside of that core. The Bank of America lot is a perfect place, possibly with the lot behind the Whole Earth Center, to put a mixed use multi-story garage-stores-living units: but, if you do that you must provide shuttle transportation into Palmer Square.

**Toby Israel PhD:** As we speak, there are more and more developers coming into our neighborhoods and changing them. We can come up with a million ideas for changes and recommendations. And you can have a commission. Let's put the rubber to the road and tell us now what is going to happen now in terms of action.

**Achilles Antoniadis:** We want more green park space. Convert Franklin Parking Lot into a park with benches. We propose electric mini-buses for local transit. Bring the Dinky station closer to town center. What a mistake to move it where it is now!! We live on 33 Harris Road. This meeting is a great idea. Council members and the Mayor should be present to hear people's point of view. Where do these comments go to?

**Louise Wilson:** [There is] a sense that town has no plan...that there is a disconnect between the public and the elected officials, the Planning Board and the Zoning Board. We need to work with developers and be realistic. BUT also maintain high standards for design.

**Yina Moore:** ...the University's mortgage programs impact all of us and the limited stock of housing in the town, our market issues and their supply of housing for their market which is growing. Every time there is a faculty member hired and they don't have housing for them, they come to our neighborhoods and their incentives push up the competitiveness of pricing no matter what neighborhood you live in. It tends to push up the cost of housing. The university needs to provide for housing for people they are hiring with high salaries and long-term tenure-tracked positions on land that they have that is obviously not most convenient to the center.

**Jim Firestone [13 Vandeventer]:** "A town is not a city. We are talking about the beginnings of a city."

**Suzanne Lehrer:** I am a piano teacher and I teach independently at the Westminster Conservatory, so I'd like to follow up on something David Cohen said. "we'd like to encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions". Something that I hope is that whatever happens to the College and the Campus, that the Conservatory with its 2000 students is going to remain here. And we can work together with arts services and organizations to create an arts center/arts space for the Princeton Symphony and others. To work together.

**Miranda Hemphill [16 Chestnut]:** "I have lived in Princeton almost all of my life, I am concerned about commercial intrusion, bleeding into our neighborhood, and, frankly, into any residential neighborhood. I have read in zoning documents that their purpose is to prevent bleed-off. Too much impervious surfaces. If we are talking about re-zoning, what will be the result of our comments here? How do they relate to the official goings on. I'd like to know what official force things spoken about here have."

**Marina Rubina AIA [28 Quarry St]:** "I am for small, green, high density. Re-zoning is possible. We are trying to see what people want. What do we want to see?"

**Jeff Gradone:** "When I try to hire people, it is very difficult because for them to find a place to live that is fun. They would rather live in Hoboken."

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