

WEST WINDSOR TOWNSHIP PLANNING BOARD MEETING
REGULAR MEETING
June 17, 2026

The Regular meeting of the Planning Board was called to order at 6:35 pm by Chairman Karp in Meeting Room A in the Municipal Building.

STATEMENT OF ADEQUATE NOTICE

Pursuant to the Sunshine Law, a notice of this meeting's date, time, location, and agenda was mailed to the news media, posted on the township bulletin board, and filed with the Municipal Clerk on June 3, 2026.

ROLL CALL AND DECLARATION OF QUORUM

Michael Karp, Chairman, Class IV

Curtis Hoberman, Vice Chairman, Class IV

ABSENT: Anis Baig, Class IV

Hemant Marathe, Mayor, Class I

Linda Geevers, Councilwoman, Class III

Sue Appelget, Class IV

Jyotika Bahree, Class II

Simon Pankove, Class IV

Allen Schectel, Class IV

Pankaj Patel, Alt. #1

TOWNSHIP CONSULTANT STAFF PRESENT

Martina Baillie, Esq., Attorney, Muller & Baillie, P.C.

David Novak, PP, Planner, Burgis & Associates

Edward Snieckus, Jr., LLA, PP, ASLA, Burgis & Associates

Francis Guzik, PE, Township Engineer

Quazi Masood, PE, PTOE, Traffic Engineer, Arora & Associates

Lisa Komjati, Administrative Secretary

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chairman Karp opened the meeting for public comment on non-agenda and non-pending application items. There were no comments from the public.

MINUTES

May 6, 2026

Mr. Pankove made a motion to approve the May 6, 2026 minutes; seconded Mr. Schectel.

Roll Call:

Aye: Patel, Schectel, Pankove, Appelget, Geevers, Marathe, Hoberman

Nay: None

Abstention(s): Bahree, Karp

Absent: Baig

RESOLUTION(S):

PB 26-02

Market Fair Mall/Tenant Improvements

Preliminary/Final Major Site Plan

3535 US Route 1; Block 7.15, Lot 14.04

Chairman Karp stated that the signature page for Resolution PB26-02 must be amended to remove his name because he was absent from that meeting and Vice Chairman Hoberman will sign the Resolution.

Chairman Karp entertained a motion to approve Resolution PB 26-02 with the amendment to the signature page; Motion to approve by Mr. Pankove; seconded Mr. Schectel.

Roll Call:

Aye: Patel, Schectel, Pankove, Appelget, Geevers, Marathe, Hoberman

Nay: None

Abstention(s): Bahree, Karp

Absent: Baig

APPLICATION(S):

PB26-05

Woodstone Residential Annex, LLC

Preliminary/Final Major Site Plan

200 Farber Road; Block 86, Lot 58.02

Property Zoned: R-5F District

MLUL: 6/30/2026

The applicant is seeking amended preliminary and final site plan approval to revise the portion of the site previously approved for a retail/commercial building with a 4-story, 35-unit apartment building. The preschool approved with original application is under construction. The design is intended to be similar in style and complement the existing Woodmont Way Community across Canal Pointe Boulevard with attached garages, stone facing, and similar finishes with extensive landscaping throughout the property.

Attorney Baillie confirmed that proof of publication was in order and the Board has jurisdiction.

Peter Wilson, Esq., introduced himself as attorney for the applicant. He explained that the project had previously received approval under Resolution PB24-01 for a two-phase development consisting of a preschool daycare facility and a commercial office building. Phase 1, the Malvern School, is currently under construction on the southern portion of the property in the B-2 zone. Since that approval, the township adopted its fourth-round affordable housing plan and rezoned the northern portion of the property as the R-5F Residential Affordable Housing District. As part of the township's affordable housing compliance, the applicant acknowledged that the proposed residential development would replace the office building previously approved as Phase 2 of PB24-01. The applicant is seeking amended preliminary and final major site plan approval to replace the office building with a four-story multifamily building containing 35 dwelling units, including nine affordable units, together with related site improvements. Although on-site

amenities are not required, the applicant intends to allow residents of the proposed development to use the recreational amenities at the existing Woodmont Community across Canal Pointe Boulevard. The property will be governed through a condominium ownership structure covering both the previously approved school and the proposed residential component. The applicant has prepared a draft master deed and bylaw documents establishing responsibility for the ownership, operation, and maintenance of common elements and shared infrastructure, including private access drives, parking areas, stormwater management facilities, utilities, and other common improvements. The applicant is not requesting any variances, but will seek several design waivers, which his experts will discuss. Mr. Wilson stated for the record that the applicant had received the review letters from the Township Professionals and Fire Chief Lynch and generally agreed with the comments and recommendations contained in them.

Attorney Wilson introduced the following witnesses that will testify on behalf of the applicant:

Michael Marinelli, Menlo Engineering – Project Engineer

Stephen Tietke, Sonnenfeld and Trocchia - Architect

David Shropshire, Shropshire Associates, LLC – Traffic Engineer

Attorney Baillie simultaneously swore in the applicant's witnesses, and they were all accepted as expert witnesses by the Board.

Michael Marinelli, Engineer, introduced Exhibit A-1, Woodstone Residential Annex Existing Conditions, and described the 3.29-acre property at Block 86, Lot 58.02, 200 Farber Road, with frontage on Canal Pointe Boulevard, Farber Road, and Meadow Road. He noted that Woodmont Residential is across Canal Pointe Boulevard, industrial flex uses are across Farber Road, and the mall is across Meadow Road. The previously approved Malvern School is under construction on the 1.75-acre B-2 portion of the site as an approximately 11,000-square-foot, two-story daycare facility. The northern 1.54-acre portion, formerly approved for an office building, has been rezoned R-5F Residential Affordable Housing District. Referring to Exhibit A-2, Woodstone Residential Annex Overall Plan, Mr. Marinelli explained that the applicant seeks amended preliminary and final major site plan approval to replace the approved office building with a permitted four-story multifamily building containing 35 units, including nine affordable units, and related parking. The plan provides 67 spaces, including 49 surface spaces, nine garage driveways on the south side of the building, two ADA spaces, one ADA-accessible garage, EV-adaptable garages, and EV charging stations. The school and residential areas will remain separated, with the school retaining its own parking. The previously approved Farber Road full-access drive and Meadow Road right-out exit are constructed and being finalized. Existing detention facilities on the southern portion manage stormwater for the entire project. Mr. Marinelli stated that the building meets setback, yard, impervious coverage, and affordable housing requirements, and no variances are requested. Submitted templates show emergency and larger-vehicle circulation, and the Fire Official confirmed his requirements were met. On-site amenities include sidewalks, benches, landscaping, and a masonry trash enclosure for two large dumpsters, with private trash collection. The applicant requested design waivers for excess parking resulting from EV credits, parking within the front yard due to the site's three frontages, relief from a loading berth for a building over 10,000 square feet, and lighting levels of 2.7 foot-candles. Mr. Marinelli stated that box trucks can circulate on-site, deliveries and move-ins will be managed during non-peak hours, and the applicant agrees with the Township Professional's buffering and tree comments. He further stated that the stormwater system meets quantity, quality, and groundwater recharge requirements; snow will be stored at the ends of the two drive aisles where no landscaping is proposed; and the increased water demand from the residential use exceeds the 8,000-gallon-per-day threshold, requiring DEP permitting, NJ American Water testing, and fire-flow review for sprinklers.

The Township's Planning Board Professionals were sworn in by Attorney Baillie:

David Novak, PP, Planner, Burgis & Associates

Edward Snieckus, Jr., LLA, PP, ASLA, Burgis & Associates

Francis Guzik, PE, Township Engineer

Quazi Masood, PE, PTOE, Traffic Engineer, Arora & Associates

Vice Chairman Hoberman questioned the two EV parking spaces shown on the site plan, noting that one is a standard space and the other is barrier-free. He asked whether the ordinance requires a barrier-free parking space to include a charging station. Township Planner Novak explained that state legislation requires a percentage of ADA-accessible spaces to be equipped with EVSE connections. For multifamily dwellings, at least 5% of such spaces must be available and accessible to people with disabilities. Vice Chairman Hoberman later questioned the safety of the Woodstone residents in the intersection of Meadow Road and Canal Pointe Boulevard crossing to use the amenities at the Woodmont development. Mr. Marinelli confirmed that there were activated pedestrian signals present and stated that a sidewalk was added at the request of the Township Professionals, which will provide residents with a direct route to the amenities without walking around the development.

Councilwoman Geevers asked whether affordable housing residents could rent garage spaces and whether discounts would be available. Mr. Marinelli said the spaces would be offered on a first-come, first-served basis. Attorney Wilson explained that any garage rent paid by qualified affordable residents would have to remain within the applicable maximum housing cost. Mr. Schetel asked whether there would be enough surface parking if no garage spaces were leased. Mr. Marinelli stated that the project provides the required equivalent number of spaces, but without leased garages the residential portion alone in that area would be technically deficient. He noted that the overall site has 67 spaces, which is more parking than required and they will rely on shared parking, since the daycare will not operate at night or on weekends when apartment parking demand is higher. Each unit will receive one assigned space, which will be marked for the 35 units, with the rest of the spaces available for additional vehicles and guests.

Mr. Pankove asked about gaps in the trees along Canal Pointe Boulevard, noting that the plans appeared to show two or three missing trees. Mr. Marinelli stated that the gap was likely related to sight-line requirements. Mr. Pankove also asked whether bike racks would be provided. Mr. Marinelli confirmed that bike racks are included and meet the requirements for both the Malvern School and the residential development, with space for four bicycles outside the building and additional bicycle storage inside.

Chairman Karp referenced Fire Chief Lynch's letter and asked about the fire truck turnaround area. Mr. Marinelli stated that the Fire Chief had approved site circulation and explained that a fire truck would enter from Farber Road, travel north and then east along the driveway, proceed south, and exit in either direction. He added that firefighting would likely occur from the street frontage or the shared parking area between the two buildings. Ms. Appelget asked about the north-side landscape buffer, noting that Chief Lynch's letter referred to low landscaping. Mr. Snieckus recommended confirming this with Chief Lynch because some proposed trees would not be low landscaping. Chairman Karp requested that Chief Lynch's review of the landscaping be included as a condition of approval.

Quazi Masood, Township's Traffic Engineer, referred to the third comment in his letter concerning turning templates for larger vehicles, including garbage trucks, fire trucks, and SU-30 vehicles. He noted that the submitted templates showed

vehicle paths along the northeast and northwest corridors. Mr. Marinelli explained that this was a printing error and that a passenger-vehicle path had been repeated on the truck-movement templates. He stated that the templates were intended to show larger-vehicle movements along the southern side of the site and that corrected templates would be submitted.

Stephen Tietke, Architect, reviewed the proposed building's architectural features. He stated that the four-story building is designed to comply with the R-5F Affordable Housing District requirements and will contain 35 units, including nine affordable units: 17 one-bedroom units, one affordable; 16 two-bedroom units, six affordable; and two three-bedroom units, both affordable. Of the affordable units, two must be very low income, three low income, and four moderate income. The building will be accessed through a central vestibule with two egress stairways, resident mailboxes, and a package room. One elevator and two stairways will serve the upper floors. Eight first-floor storage closets will be available to residents on a first-come, first-served basis and may provide additional bicycle storage. He explained that each unit will include open living and dining areas, in-unit laundry, kitchens and bathrooms adaptable for handicapped use, dedicated HVAC in a mechanical closet accessed from the balcony or patio, and bedroom windows. Mr. Tietke introduced Exhibit A-3, View from Farber Road, and Exhibit A-4, View from Canal Pointe Boulevard and Meadow Road, showing the building's relationship to the Woodmont Way neighborhood across the street, Canal Pointe Boulevard, Meadow Road, and the Malvern School. He concluded that the design is consistent with the R-5F district, complements the surrounding development, and satisfies Township design standards.

Councilwoman Geevers asked to review drawings for the units with lofts. Mr. Tietke stated that the drawings had not yet been finalized but explained how the one- and two-bedroom unit plans would be modified to include lofts. Councilwoman Geevers said the Board should review the drawings before approval, noting past concerns about lofts being used as bedrooms. She emphasized that the lofts should remain open, with walls that do not extend to the ceiling. Attorney Wilson stated that submission of final floor plans could be made a condition of approval and noted that the configuration is similar to the development across the street. Councilwoman Geevers responded that this is a separate application and that lofts remain a sensitive issue. Mr. Tietke explained that the lofts would be designed as mezzanines, open to the space below, with no door, direct stair access, a low wall overlooking the living area, and no closets, though windows may be included if dormers are possible. The lofts would be limited to fourth-floor one- and two-bedroom units; of the 10 fourth-floor units, approximately nine are expected to include lofts. Mr. Pankove suggested requiring the lease to state that lofts may not be used as bedrooms. Planner Novak agreed that approval should be conditioned on the lofts not being designed and used as bedrooms, with limits on wall height and no doors or closets.

David Shropshire, Traffic Engineer, introduced himself, provided his credentials, and discussed his traffic study. He compared the proposed 35-unit residential building with the previously approved commercial use and stated that, based on the Institute of Transportation Engineers data, the residential use would generate 13 to 14 peak-hour trips, approximately 59 fewer than the prior approval. He also conducted traffic counts and found that the added trips would not affect levels of service at the two intersections. He stated that the roadways, driveways, internal aisles, and parking areas can safely accommodate the project, and that the 67 proposed parking spaces are more than sufficient based on his experience with similar developments. In response to Mr. Pankove's earlier question, he stated that he had not reviewed the sight triangle in relation to the landscaping along Canal Pointe Boulevard, making that an appropriate condition of approval.

David Novak, Township Planner, Burgis & Associates, reviewed his letter dated June 8, 2026 and stated that the applicant had addressed all his comments.

Francis Guzik, Township Engineer, reviewed his June 11, 2026 letter and stated that he had no objection to the requested checklist waivers. Regarding comment 1.03, he asked how the shared recreational facilities would be memorialized if the separate tax lots were later conveyed to different entities. Attorney Wilson stated that he would work with the Township Attorney to prepare appropriate documentation. Regarding comment 2.04, Mr. Guzik asked that the passenger-vehicle turning diagram be revised to show a larger vehicle, such as a Suburban or SUV, rather than the smaller sports car shown. Mr. Marinelli noted that the drive aisles are 24 feet wide and the parking spaces are 9 by 18 feet, which is a standard parking-lot layout, and agreed to provide an additional turning-movement demonstration as a condition of approval. Mr. Guzik stated that he had no further comments based on the testimony presented.

Quazi Masood, Traffic Consultant with Arora & Associates, reviewed his June 11, 2026 letter. Regarding comment 3, he noted that the turning-template issue had already been discussed and stated that he looked forward to receiving the revised templates for review and approval. Regarding comment 2, he explained that the Fair Share Calculation Memorandum, prepared on July 23, 2024, was based on the Malvern School and a medical office building and must be updated to reflect the proposed changes in this application.

Edward Snieckus, Jr., Landscape Architect with Burgis & Associates, reviewed his June 15, 2026 letter. He stated that he had reviewed the landscape plan and agreed with it but recommended that the applicant evaluate whether one or two additional trees should be added along Canal Pointe Boulevard. He also stated that he would confer with Chief Lynch regarding the proposed buffer landscaping. Mr. Snieckus noted that benches are proposed within the Canal Pointe Boulevard public right-of-way, which would typically require governing body approval, and recommended making that approval a condition. He also asked the applicant to identify the proposed bench type on the plans. Finally, because the applicant intends to preserve the trees along Meadow Road, he requested that the soil erosion and sediment control plan be revised to show that the limit of clearing will not affect those trees.

Chairman Karp read into the record Chief Lynch's revised review letter dated June 17, 2026, which stated the applicant addressed his concerns.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Karp opened the meeting for public comment on Planning Board Application PB26-05. There was no public comment.

Mr. Pankove made a motion to close public comment; seconded by Mayor Marathe. Approved by Voice Vote.

Mr. Pankove noted that applications involving affordable housing typically include a report from the Affordable Housing Committee and asked that the record reflects that no such report was provided for this application. Ms. Appelget stated that, according to the transmittal letter, the application had not been sent to the Committee. Planner Novak explained that the Township is between Land Use Managers and stated that, going forward, applications will be forwarded to the Affordable Housing Committee as appropriate.

Attorney Baillie listed the design waivers and conditions of approval.

Chairman Karp entertained a motion to approve PB26-05 Woodstone Residential Annex, LLC. with the conditions listed by Attorney Baillie. Motion to approve by Mr. Pankove; seconded by Mr. Schectel.

Roll Call:

Aye: Patel, Schectel, Pankove, Bahree, Appelget, Geevers, Marathe, Hoberman, Karp

Nay: None

Abstention(s): None

Absent: Baig

BREAK: 8:30 PM

RECONVENED: 8:39 PM

PB-26-06

Clark Plaza

Signage Waiver

217 Clarksville Road; Block 10, Lot 14

Property Zoned: B-1 District

MLUL: 6/30/26

The applicant seeks a waiver from the nonresidential sign requirements which allow for a 48-sf sign, not to exceed 9 ft in height. The existing sign is 60-sf and 12.5 ft tall. The proposed sign is 126 sf and 16.25 ft tall and will be internally illuminated. The proposed sign will be placed in the same location as the existing sign. It identifies the property address and includes 14 spaces for the tenants. The landscaping around the bottom of the sign will be replaced with appropriate planting. No other changes of any kind are proposed for the site.

Rosalyn Westlake, Esq., introduced herself as the attorney for the applicant/owner Clark Plaza LLC, which is referred to as Village Square Plaza. She explained they are here tonight requesting a waiver from the non-residential sign requirements. She gave a brief overview of the project and introduced the witnesses that are testifying on behalf of the applicant:

Kelly Distefano Hallam – Village Square Plaza - Property Manager

Phil Smith - Ace Sign Company

David Shropshire, Shropshire Associates, LLC – Traffic Engineer

Attorney Baillie simultaneously swore in the witnesses.

Kelly Distefano Hallam, Property Manager for Village Square Plaza, introduced Exhibit A-1 listing the plaza's 14 tenants. She also introduced Exhibits A-2 through A-8, which are recent photographs of the existing Village Square sign and comparable signs at nearby shopping centers. She stated that the current sign is outdated and identifies only the shopping center's address, while the proposed directory sign would also identify the tenants. She explained that the Clarksville Road closure has significantly reduced passing traffic and created substantial hardship for the tenants. As landlord, the applicant is seeking to improve the center and increase tenant visibility. She noted that the center has been part of the Township since 1993 and is home to 14 small businesses seeking to remain viable.

Phil Smith, Ace Sign Company, introduced Exhibit A-9 which showed a picture of the proposed sign. He stated this will be a double-sided illuminated sign that will be 126 square feet and 16.25 feet tall. The existing sign will be removed and the post that is closest to the roadway will be placed in the same exact location so the sign will not be any closer to the road. Each tenant will have its own separate case with its name and logo.

Councilwoman Geevers noted that a large bush blocks part of the existing sign and asked whether it would be removed before installation of the new sign. She also asked whether the sign illumination would be turned off at a certain time. Attorney Westlake stated that the bush would be removed and replaced with annual or perennial plantings that would not obstruct the sign. Mr. Novak stated that he was not aware of any requirement limiting the hours of illumination. Chairman Karp noted that similar signs are typically illuminated overnight and likely would not be bright enough to disturb nearby residents. Mr. Snieckus asked about the sign's lumen level. Mr. Smith stated that it would typically range from 40,000 to 100,000 lumens and that a white plastic case over the modules would reduce the brightness. Mr. Novak suggested that, if the Board had concerns, it could include a six-month look-back condition allowing the lighting to be reviewed and reduced if neighbor complaints are received.

David Shropshire, Traffic Engineer, provided his credentials and was accepted by the Board as an expert witness. He stated that the proposed Village Square Shopping Center sign would enhance traffic safety and that granting the requested waiver would not impair the intent or purpose of the West Windsor zoning ordinance. He explained that the sign would improve visibility while remaining consistent with other ground-mounted tenant signs in the area and the existing architecture. In his opinion, the proposed sign would improve decision sight distance for motorists on Clarksville Road, better identify the center's tenants, and provide sufficient justification for the requested size and height waivers.

David Novak, PP, Planner with Burgis & Associates, referenced his June 12, 2026 report and asked whether the proposed sign would be outside the sight triangle. Mr. Shropshire stated that he reviewed the AASHTO sight triangle and determined that, from 15 feet back from the travel lane—slightly beyond the existing stop bar for the left-turn movement—there is more than 500 feet of clear sight distance in both directions at the existing sign location. Because the proposed sign will remain in the same location, he stated that adequate safe sight distance will be maintained. Mr. Novak then recommended discussing the plantings proposed beneath the sign. Attorney Westlake agreed that, as a condition of approval, the applicant would work with the Township Landscape Architect to determine appropriate plantings. Mr. Novak went on to explain that two signage applications were before the Board: one in a redevelopment area and this application is in a non-residential zoning district. For properties outside redevelopment areas, signage standards are contained in the site plan requirements, so deviations typically require a design waiver; within redevelopment areas, similar deviations require a variance.

Quazi Masood, Traffic Consultant, Arora & Associates reviewed his June 17, 2026 report and stated that this project meets all the MUAASHTO and MUTCD guidelines and he has no objections to the sign waiver request.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Karp opened the meeting for public comment on Planning Board Application PB26-06.

Attorney Bailie swore in each of the speakers.

MURALI PEDAKOTLA, owner of Gateway of India, said that he has lost more than 50% of his business due to the road closure. He believes this signage will help the businesses by giving them more visibility. It's also a good way to help with advertising.

TIM STEENSTRUP, owner of The Little Gym in West Windsor, stated that even before the bridge closure, he had asked the landlord to provide signage because customers had no clear way to know the businesses were in the plaza. He said the businesses received no benefit from pedestrian or drive-by traffic and that the sign would be important to the plaza's vitality once the bridge reopens. Although the sign would have little immediate impact while the bridge remains closed, he stated that the closure has severely harmed the businesses, which are barely surviving, and that the sign would help when traffic returns.

CARMEN GONZALEZ, Capuano's Restaurant, explained that this restaurant has been a part of Village Square Plaza and the West Windsor community for the past 33 years. They are seeking assistance with obtaining whatever is necessary to install a shopping center sign displaying the names of the businesses located in Village Square Plaza. She believes this sign would improve visibility for all the businesses and make it easier for residents and visitors to find them. She believes Village Square Shopping Center is one of the only shopping centers in West Windsor without a directory sign. She would greatly appreciate their support and consideration of this request.

Mr. Pankove made a motion to close public comment; seconded by Councilwoman Geevers. Approved by Voice Vote.

Chairman Karp entertained a motion to approve PB26-06 Clark Plaza Signage Waiver with conditions as necessary. Motion to approve by Vice Chairman Hoberman; seconded by Ms. Bahree.

Roll Call:

Aye: Patel, Schectel, Pankove, Bahree, Appelget, Geevers, Marathe, Hoberman, Karp

Nay: None

Abstention(s): None

Absent: Baig

PB26-03

Princeton Ascend Development LLC

Sign Variance

43 Princeton-Hightstown Road, Ste 2106; Block 12.04, Lot 25

Property Zoned: RP-7 District

(Continued from May 6, 2026)

Continuation of application for relief for signage accessory to a mixed-use building at 43 Princeton Hightstown Road: a variance from 200-258(D)(4)(d)(1) of the West Windsor Township zoning ordinance (the "Ordinance") to permit a monument sign where the property is set back less than 50 feet from the right of way; a variance from 200-258 (D)(4)(d)(2) of the Ordinance to permit a monument sign measuring 100 square feet; and a variance from 200-258 (D)(4)(d)(3) of the Ordinance to permit a monument sign that is 12 feet high.

Augusta O'Neill, of Klehr Harrison Harvey Branzburg representing Princeton Ascend, stated that the applicant had appeared the previous month for accessory signage related to its mixed-use development, which includes commercial

and residential. She explained that, after receiving comments, the applicant met with Township professionals and revised the proposal, reducing the sign from 100 square feet to 80 square feet. She submitted the updated sign plans as Exhibit A, noting that the prior dimensions were shown in red. Ms. O'Neill also acknowledged Mr. Schectel's alternative plan, marked Exhibit B-1. Mr. Schectel's proposed plan essentially flips the dimensions they proposed but keeps the sign at 80 square feet and they would be amendable to this design. She explained that the applicant's plan included the ordinance-required landscaping, and that a different orientation of the sign would require a waiver from that landscaping requirement. She stated that the applicant was also seeking three variances: to permit an 80-square-foot sign where 30 square feet is allowed, to permit a sign set back less than 50 feet from the right-of-way, and to permit a sign height above the 6 feet which is allowed. She emphasized the need for a sign because the tenants have complained that emergency vehicles are having problems identifying the building showing no address. She added that the updated signage package also shows that the street number was added to the side and bottom of the sign.

Mr. Schectel explained that his suggested dimensions were 8.75 feet high by 10 feet wide, compared with the applicant's proposed 8-foot width and 12-foot height. The sign area would remain 80 square feet, and the wider design could allow larger tenant lettering. Chairman Karp suggested placing the street number at the top of the sign rather than the bottom so it would not be covered by snow. Councilwoman Geevers asked about the size of the tenant lettering. Attorney O'Neill stated that the letters are currently 4.5 inches high.

Attorney Baillie simultaneously swore in the witnesses for the applicant:

Michael Jin, Applicant, Princeton Ascend
Howard Chinn, Forman Sign Company

Howard Chinn of Forman Sign Company explained that the letters are currently 4.5 inches high. Shorter tenant names would allow for larger lettering, while longer names would require smaller, more condensed lettering. Councilwoman Geevers asked why "Princeton Ascend" was so prominent while the tenant lettering was much smaller, noting that the area is busy and smaller lettering is difficult for drivers to read. Attorney O'Neill explained that, because the building is also residential, the applicant believed it was important to include the building name on the sign. Mr. Chinn stated that, under Mr. Schectel's suggested design, the Princeton Ascend lettering would be smaller because the tenant panels would be arranged side by side rather than stacked.

Vice Chairman Hoberman asked why "Ascend" appeared upward on one side of the sign and downward on the other. Mr. Chinn explained that two-sided signs typically display lettering upward on one side and downward on the other. Vice Chairman Hoberman stated that, for consistency, the word should read from bottom to top on both faces, consistent with the meaning of "Ascend." Chairman Karp agreed that both sides should read "Princeton Ascend," rather than one side showing "Ascend Princeton," because people read from left to right.

Planner Novak explained that, as a general design principle, the tenant names should be closest to the roadway, so "Princeton Ascend" should remain where it is on both sides of the sign. He stated that no lettering layout would satisfy everyone because the sign will read differently depending on whether a person is traveling northbound or southbound. On one side, "Ascend" may appear first, while on the other, "Princeton" may appear first; however, he believed people would understand the sign to read "Princeton Ascend." He reiterated that the Board preferred Mr. Schectel's suggested

design, with an 8.75-foot height, 120-inch width. He added that the applicant also agreed to move the number 43 to the top of the sign.

Councilwoman Geevers stated that she wanted the tenant lettering to be at least 7 inches high and wanted to review the sign's appearance before voting. Mr. Schectel stated that the applicant's proposed sign created visual clutter and was not a true monument sign, which he described as a low, freestanding sign that sits directly on the ground. He characterized the proposal as more of a pedestal or freestanding sign and stated that a 12-foot sign near the adjacent building would obscure many of that building's features. He believed his suggested sign height was a reasonable compromise because the applicant would still have 80 square feet of sign area to use. Chairman Karp added that the wider sign would provide extra space to add new tenants or adjust lettering size.

Planner Novak stated that the 7-inch requirement should apply to either the lettering or the logo, because the lettering may be smaller depending on the logo design. He added that the overall design was appropriate and that the brick base matched the building so there was no need for landscaping.

Mayor Marathe stated that the sign should be 10 feet wide and 8 feet high, totaling 80 square feet, and that the 18-inch base should not be included in that calculation. He stated that the landscaping variance should be granted because of the reduced sign height, and the brick base would not require landscaping in front. Attorney O'Neill stated that the applicant agreed to the conditions presented.

Chairman Karp entertained a motion to approve Application 26-03 Princeton Ascend Development, LLC., Signage Variance with conditions. Motion to approve by Mayor Marathe; seconded by Mr. Pankove.

Roll Call:

Aye: Patel, Schectel, Pankove, Appelget, Geevers, Marathe, Hoberman

Nay: None

Abstention(s): Bahree, Karp

Absent: Baig

ADJOURNMENT:

Chairman Karp adjourned the meeting at 10:25 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Trish Van Clef

Recording Secretary