

TJC Board Meeting 2/19/26

Present:

Lew Gantwerk

Ed Simon

Warren Mitlak

Diane Guvenis

Heidi Joseph

Lynne Ross

Judy Kutin

Moshe Margolin

Edye Kamenir

Louise Sandberg

Joel Berger

RAM

Suzanne Esterman

Abigail Rose

Beth Katz

Polly Strauss

Brad Bailey

Michelle Bellows

Jen Black

Len Grossman

Dina Shaw

Abbye Cornfield

Rachelle Simon

Committee: Josh Zinder, Sara Just, Lew Gantwerk, Edye Kamenir , Polly Strauss, Jeremy Spiegel, David Politziner, Jesse Treu(abs), Phil Carchman (abs)

7:05 Lew called the meeting to order

I. Corner Lot Committee

Josh: History of Mt Laurel and Affordable housing legislation. In 2023 the third round of Affordable Housing included TJC in the overlay. Riverside neighborhood is the only one in Princeton without affordable housing units. 2024 the fourth round of housing needs to be provided. Most of the affordable housing in Princeton is called inclusion housing with 80% of units market rate and 20% affordable. New ordinances need to be created which must be adopted to implement the town plan by 3/15/26. Princeton's town plan was accepted by the state and is on track.

There is a new law signed into effect 1/26 to incentivize houses of worship to develop housing on their property.

There are some diagrams to show possibilities, but nothing has been designed. There are two separate zoning designations on the TJC property. The lot can be developed into apartments. Anything to existing buildings has to go to the Zoning Board because we have a conditional use in the R2 zone.

An affordable housing overlay allows up to 89 units in a three story building with parking underneath. There is no FAR restriction (Floor Area Ratio) which means the building compared to the lot has no restriction in order to incentivize building affordable housing.

Initially the Committee considered 19 units with 5 affordable since that is the minimum.

Is the idea viable for a developer?

What is the minimal number of units for developer to be interested?

Does it provide TJC financial security?

Does it advance Tikun olam?

3 more

FAQ

Can we say no to all housing? Yes

Can we look at it later? Yes

Can the town take the property away? No

Can the developer build our portion too? Yes

Can we sell the land and get more money and build elsewhere? Yes

In the fourth round, we can adjust the zoning and not be considered conditional use but “as of right” that would allow us to reduce time for approvals.

We need to consider our “Wants”: Better school, day care, better social hall
Roughly \$10million to transform the campus

If the only focus on the educational component then cost is \$4million

3 possibilities:

Housing where the school building is

Corner lot

Deeper lot next to the corner

Average 1000 sq ft/unit. Size of affordable units are controlled by UHAC.
Potentially could build townhouses. Typically consist of only market rate units.

Tikun Olam 20% affordable, could be supportive house for people with special needs, refugee housing, Senior housing but developers may feel its too restrictive

Could sell or lease property

Met with Bob Powell for consulting advice:

19 units do not work for a developer. Need at least 40 units. Possibility of town granting PILOT (payment in lieu of taxes) which would make property more valuable.

Currently TJC does not pay any taxes on property so it would make sense for the town to grant a PILOT to get some payment.

Committee leaning toward using the empty lot with 89 units in a three story building and underground parking that would give TJC about \$9 million.
Could be fewer units with some townhouses or a buffer with 54-60 units.

Talked with town twice. The town is open to having more than 19 units. And prepared to adjust zoning. If zoning modifications are needed, the town prefers they be done this year.

Can we sell our lot and buy another? You could build 165 units on this property. We could sell for about \$15million, more if there was a PILOT. New construction would be \$15-20million with purchase property \$6-9 million. Leaving shortfall of \$9-12 million. So this option does not really work. If we had an angel donor we might as well just build here.

Can we do something without affordable housing?

With affordable housing we can build at least 40 units which can create endowment and/or build something for TJC

Should we do nothing?

We don't need to do anything

To raise \$10 million we would need to get closer to 100 units

Do we have control over what housing would look like? We can have review committee but that can impede income.

Wall for security and privacy? Yes, as long as it's within zoning requirements

Financial safeguards so we don't squander the funds? Question for the board to put in oversight

Why don't we raise \$1million and update the school? Probably not enough to renovate the old building

Can we create landscaping? It is an option

Can we put proceeds into endowment? Yes

Locked into 19 units? No

If we build less after getting an amendment, is that a problem? Yes
4th round says housing should be on corner lot.

If we get new zoning for housing, can the whole TJC campus get new zoning? Yes but Princeton Zoning Board would want to see whole plan

Deadline for master plan and zoning amendments? Town would prefer within a year or two.

March 15 deadline ? Don't need to do anything

Do we have to complete it within 10 years? It matters to the town but not to TJC

This is an opportunity for money and zoning modifications but need to decide plans.

This is an inflection point: We can continue to struggle or take a step into the future. Need to study if vision can be aided by sale or lease of property. Then RFP sent to developers. Can also engage fundraising consultant.

Might be more cost effective to take down the whole school building.

Warren: Would there be parking for every apartment?

Josh: Typically between ½ to 1 parking space per unit depending on location. Here people would need a car more.

Low: The purpose of the presentation tonight is to gain Board approval to continue the planning and taking the next step to generate a Master Plan. Consider the opportunity the township is giving us to provide affordable housing and \$4-5million.

David: We have ten years to decide what to do. This gets us through the approval process much more easily.

Moshe: What is the cost for the next step?

Josh: Master plan architect component in my office usually \$36k but for TJC would be less. Fundraiser consultant \$18-75k. RFP gets paid as a percentage of the deal, maybe 3% of the deal.

Edye: There is ambivalence in the congregation about colocating with housing. We should talk again with the congregation.

RAM: Would there be parallel tracks for housing and for what we want for ourselves?

Lew: yes

Moshe and Edye make a motion to move forward in planning and Suzanne seconds. Motion passed.

Joel: Sunday May 17 10:00 Brunch for Annual meeting 12:00.

Judy: This Saturday Shabbat L'kulanu. We need you to come.

RAM: Purim Monday night 5:30 young families, 6:00 services, 6:15 costume parade, 6:30 Jersey boys Purim spiel, Full Megillah and truncated family Megilla readings, then party with DJ James. Wednesday is Purim carnival. We need volunteers.

Lew: Nominating committee chaired by Abigail, outgoing trustee. Also 2 board members Heidi and Fred. 4 congregants Alexandra, Andrea, Mike Leopold and Harry Cummins

Lew: Minutes approved

8:55 Meeting Adjourned