An Arts and Transit Neighborhood that Meets University and Community Needs

Joint Meeting of Borough Council and Township Committee
January 31, 2011
Existing Zoning

• Borough: NB, E2, R3
• Township: S1, E1, E2
Starting Points

• 1984: University purchases two station buildings and surrounding lands from NJ Transit for almost $900,000 and agrees to provide parking for permit holders and daily commuters (number of such spaces now 175).
• Agreement allows University to relocate Dinky terminus to the south.
• University acquires additional properties to permit an integrated and holistic development.
Starting Points

• 2005: Comprehensive campus plan includes space for expanded teaching in the arts.

• Plan envisions rehearsal and performance space for music, theater and dance; gallery space for visual arts; and outdoor performance space – open to the campus and the community.

• By adding music rehearsal space, plan opens 80 additional evenings per year at Richardson for community and campus groups.

• Location achieves synergies with McCarter and Berlind Theatres and is easily accessible to the public with ample evening and weekend parking.

• Location allows the achievement of other community-oriented objectives.
Starting Points

• First phase of project is estimated to cost in excess of $300 million and will take seven years to complete.
• At least half of the investment is in infrastructure improvements that have to be done before the first arts building can be built.
• Second phase adds other arts buildings, including a major performance hall.
Phase One
Future Phase
Goals

• Expand access to the arts for university students and the community.

• Improve traffic circulation.

• Preserve/enhance the Dinky experience.

• Create attractive/lively public spaces, including retail.

• Achieve major sustainability goals.
The Arts in the Community

- Arts activities are located throughout the community and the campus.
- Current locations include:
  1. Arts Council
  2. Princeton Public Library
  3. Westminster Choir College
  4. Princeton Regional Schools
  5. 185 Nassau Street
  6. The Garden Theater
  7. Richardson Auditorium/Alexander Hall
  8. Princeton University Art Museum
  9. Theatre Intime/Murray Hall
  10. Taplin Auditorium at Fine Hall
  11. McCarter and Berlind Theatres
The Proposed Neighborhood Would Provide

- New learning, performance, and exhibition spaces for students.
- Workshop space for faculty.
- Synergies for McCarter/Berlind.
- Performances and exhibits for the public.
- Summer space for community use.
- Outdoor venues for the arts.

Expand Access to the Arts

**Phase 1**

<table>
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<th>Creative &amp; Performing Arts - Public</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Black Box Theater</td>
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<td>• Forum</td>
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<td>• Gallery</td>
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<td>• Dance Studio</td>
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<td>• Music Rehearsal Room</td>
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<td>• Lecture Hall</td>
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<th>Creative &amp; Performing Arts - Academic</th>
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<td>Office and Studio Space:</td>
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<td>• Lewis Center for the Arts</td>
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<td>• Programs in Theatre and Dance</td>
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<td>• Department of Music</td>
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<th>Retail</th>
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<td>• Full Service Restaurant</td>
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<td>• Casual Dining/Café</td>
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<td>• Wawa</td>
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<td>• Box Office</td>
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<th>Transportation</th>
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<td>• NJT Station</td>
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<td>• Roundabout</td>
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<td>• Roadways</td>
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<td>• Multi-modal Transit Plaza</td>
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<td>• Bike Facilities</td>
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<td>• Commuter Parking</td>
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**Total Phase 1:** Approx 147,000 gsf

**Future Phases**

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<th>Creative &amp; Performing Arts - Public</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Performance Hall</td>
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<td>• Future Academic Buildings</td>
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**Future Phases:** Approx 130,000 gsf
"Though a University's main responsibility is to its students, part of what we teach our students is that our responsibility doesn't stop at FitzRandolph Gate. Since 1970, the gate has been kept permanently open as an emblem of our availability to the wider world. That availability begins with the immediate community of Princeton itself, and we're delighted to welcome the community to join us on the great adventure we're embarking on with the development of the Lewis Center for the Arts.

Though Princeton is already noted for cultural tourism, we're thrilled by the vision of the town becoming a truly significant destination for those interested in a wide range of the creative and performing arts. The development of an Arts and Transit neighborhood in the vicinity of the McCarter Theatre will be a major step toward making that vision a reality."

— Paul Muldoon, chair, Lewis Center for the Arts
Resolution of Board of Directors

Be it resolved that McCarter Theatre Center, by unanimous vote of its Board of Directors on November 18, 2010, expresses its enthusiastic support for Princeton University’s arts and transit campus development project. We believe that the plan brings numerous, substantial benefits to McCarter Theatre and the Princeton community at large. Among these many benefits are a much-desired greater synergy between McCarter Theatre and the University’s arts programs, a more welcoming streetscape, better and safer traffic flow and pedestrian access, greater parking availability and places for casual and fine dining. It is our belief that these improvements will positively affect the quality of life for all our citizens, present and future.
Community Access

• Princeton University facilities provide performance space for campus and community groups.

• Richardson Auditorium is currently the space most frequently requested for performances.
  o Nearly half of the public events at Richardson in academic year 2009-2010 were hosted by non-university groups.
  o The addition of rehearsal space in the Arts and Transit neighborhood should provide approximately 80 additional evening performance times in Richardson.
Community Organizations Currently Using Performance Space at Princeton

American Repertory Ballet- Princeton Ballet School
Golandsky Piano Institute
McCarter Theater Performance Group
New Jersey Association for Jazz Education, Jazz Combo Festival
Opera New Jersey
Princeton Festival
SO Percussion
American Boychoir
Tim Keyes Consort
Westminster Community Orchestra

Westminster Choir College
Princeton High School Winter Concert
West Windsor High School Concert
Boheme Opera NJ
Greater Princeton Youth Orchestra
La Shir
Montgomery High School Orchestra
New Jersey Symphony Orchestra
Princeton Girlchoir
Princeton Pro Musica
Princeton Symphony Orchestra
Princeton Young Achievers

Expand Access to the Arts
Improve Traffic Circulation

- The Master Plan element for institutional/educational uses calls upon the University and the community to work together to improve traffic flow.

- Traffic flow at Alexander/University is improved by:
  1. Introducing a roundabout.
  2. Reducing conflicts and congestion.
  3. Reducing peak hour volumes.

- Traffic flow at Alexander/Faculty is improved by:
  1. Creating an access drive from Alexander to the Lot 7 garage.
  2. Reducing peak hour volumes.
Outdated Infrastructure

- Not designed for today’s traffic volumes.
- Dinky/Wawa traffic obstructs thru-traffic & causes back-ups.
- Pedestrian crossings at Alexander & University Place cause back-ups.
- Current location cannot support a full complement of shuttles, jitneys, buses, taxis, and bikes.
- Only removing conflicts from the main arterial will relieve congestion.
- Lot 7 traffic to and from the north adds to congestion at Alexander/Faculty.
Relieving Congestion

- Roundabout improves traffic flow.
- Purpose-designed space provides a multi-modal hub for shuttles, jitneys, buses, taxis, bikes.
- Provides safer pedestrian crossings.
- Separates conflicts and moves them off the main corridor.
- Deliveries from campus: all fronts, no backs.
- Provides easy access and safe Wawa parking.
- Allows direct access to/from Lot 7 garage saving 350 vehicle miles per day and reducing north-bound traffic entering Alexander at Faculty.
- Provides bike lanes and storage
- Replaces all existing parking in-kind.

Proposed Phase 1 Site Plan

Improve Circulation
Levels of Service at Alexander & University

Improve Circulation

EXISTING

PROPOSED
Change in Use Relieves Congestion

• Shifting from office to academic/artistic use reduces peak hour traffic by 260-320 vehicles per day.
Amount of Typical Weekday Traffic

Peak Hour Ranges for New University Programs

Dinky Ridership
- To Princeton
- To Princeton Junction

Roadway Traffic
- Alexander South
- Alexander North
- University Place

Peak Activity Time for Academic Programs

AM Peak for the Corridor & Existing Site Uses

PM Peak for the Corridor & Existing Site Uses

Peak Activity Time for Performances

Improve Circulation
Access to Lot 7 Garage

- Convenient access benefits arts patrons & neighborhood visitors.
- Reduces vehicle miles traveled by 350 miles per day – reduces pollution, saves fuel, saves time.
- Reduces traffic on Faculty Road.
- Relieves congestion at Faculty Road/Alexander Street intersection.
Preserve/Enhance the Dinky Experience

• New heated/air conditioned station with restrooms, Wawa, bike amenities.

• Easy drop off/pick up.

• Easy access to shuttles, jitney, taxis.

• Convenient parking: permit and daily.

• Dinky riders provided with attractive public spaces, retail, and arts venues.

• University support for a more extensive public transit linkage with the Dinky.

• Arts, retail, and lower Alexander residential use may attract additional Dinky use.
Dinky Ridership

• About 40% of Dinky riders are affiliated with the University; additional riders are attending University meetings or events.
• Unaffiliated riders get to the Dinky by driving themselves, being driven by others, using public transit, biking, and walking.
• The walk from Nassau Street to the current station via the Wawa is longer than the walk to the proposed new station with the Wawa in it.
• Future development along Alexander in the Township would add new riders from the south.

The proposed new station with the Wawa in it would be a daily place of intersection between town and gown.
Station Parking: Proposed

- Public parking spaces within a 5-minute walking radius of the station increase from 413 to 433.
- All public parking is replaced in-kind, including 175 commuter spaces (parking and meters) within 1000 feet of the station. Other spaces include kiss & ride; Wawa customers; on-street metered and un-metered parking.
- Lot 7 garage provides spaces for retail employees and is easily accessible and available to the public on evenings and weekends.
- On-street McCarter parking is increased.

Preserve/Enhance the Dinky Experience
From NJ TRANSIT

“NJ TRANSIT is supportive of improvements to the Princeton (Dinky) Station that would benefit our riders, the University, and the community. ... And, of course, the University’s pledge to “devote its own resources to all aspects of the project” that it estimates to cost more than $300 million is an outstanding investment in the future of the community.”

Richard R. Sarles
Executive Director
February 2, 2009

Preserve/Enhance the Dinky Experience
From Governor Christie

“I am writing in advance of this evening’s joint meeting of the Princeton Borough Council and the Princeton Township Committee to express my support and that of my Administration for the proposed Arts and Transit Neighborhood in Princeton.

Lieutenant Governor Kim Guadagno, Transportation Commissioner Jim Simpson and my Chief of Staff Rich Bagger have between them met several times with representatives of Princeton Borough, Princeton Township and Princeton University to review the Arts and Transit Neighborhood proposal and discuss the economic development, transportation and cultural arts benefits it would bring to the Princeton community.”

Governor Chris Christie
January 31, 2011

Preserve/Enhance the Dinky Experience
“Princeton University’s plan to invest approximately $300 million of its own resources to transform the neighborhood in the vicinity of McCarter Theatre and the Princeton Station into a vibrant arts center for both the University campus and the Princeton community has my full support. State agencies including the Department of Transportation and New Jersey Transit Corporation are ready to work with Princeton University, Princeton Borough and Princeton Township to implement the plan, including the relocation and improvements to Princeton Station at the University’s expense.

Governor Chris Christie
January 31, 2011

Preserve/Enhance the Dinky Experience
"I am aware that there has been a robust debate about how best to ensure continuation and even improvement of rail service from Princeton to Princeton Junction. It is my view that approval and implementation of the Arts and Transit Neighborhood, with the substantial economic development and cultural benefits it would create, represents the best plan for the Princeton rail shuttle, both now and in the future.

I encourage you to work with Princeton University to create the Arts and Transit Neighborhood. You will continue to have the full support and cooperation of my Administration in that important effort."

Governor Chris Christie
January 31, 2011
Public Spaces

1. McCarter and Berlind Theatres.
2. Creative and performing arts phase 1 performance spaces – all fronts, no backs.
3. Box office.
4. Restaurant and café (retail spaces provide ratables).
5. Arts plaza (space for community activities).
6. Transit plaza.
7. Dinky station with Wawa.
8. Future phase academic space.
9. Future phase academic space.
12. Extensive landscaping.

Create Attractive/Lively Public Spaces
A Campus and Community Pedestrian Space

Create Attractive/Lively Public Spaces
Already a Public Space

- 175,000 annual McCarter patrons.
- 2,045 daily transit rides.
- 2,600 daily Wawa customers.
- 1,050 daily customers at new restaurants.
- 150-250 average evening patrons of new arts venues, approximately 50 performances a year (first phase).
- Unknown number of summer performance participants and patrons - indoor and outdoor spaces.
- Special event participants, e.g. McCarter gala.
- 160-290 housing unit capacity south on Alexander.
- 600 current residents within a 5-minute walk.
Create Attractive/Lively Public Spaces
Sustainability

- Enhance the Dinky experience (new station in an attractive setting with Wawa incorporated, convenient drop-off/pick-up and parking, connection with shuttles and jitney, bike access and storage).

- Direct access to Lot 7 reduces vehicle miles traveled by 350 per day.

- Extensive landscaping; existing area is predominantly surface parking lots, roofs, and impervious surfaces that tax stormwater infrastructure and create heat island effect.

- First phase buildings include geothermal heating and cooling; green roofs; grey water recycling; solar panels; etc.
Greening the Neighborhood

- Increased landscaping and greenspace replace paving.
- Green roofs, bio-filtration swales, and stormwater harvesting.
- Alternative energy: geothermal wells and photovoltaic panels.
- Direct access to Lot 7 garage reduces vehicular miles traveled by 350.
Improving Bike Connectivity

• Improve bike paths and connections to the Arts and Transit neighborhood.

• Provide better facilities for bike storage at the station.
Two Additional Goals

• Create an attractive gateway into Princeton including a signature building by a major architect at Alexander and University.
• Create a largely-residential mixed-use neighborhood along south Alexander Street in Princeton Township.
  – This new neighborhood would include:
    o Housing (including workforce and affordable housing)
    o Retail and office space
    o A well-defined street edge to the east and the golf course to the west
    o Attractive landscape
  – It would be:
    o Pedestrian and bike friendly
    o Built to high standards of environmental sustainability
    o An opportunity for ratable properties
Alexander Street South
Alexander Street South
Community Master Plan

• The community master plan calls upon educational institutions to:
  o Improve traffic flow.
  o Address back-ups at key intersections (including Alexander/University Place and Alexander/Faculty Road).
  o Help reduce peak hour traffic volumes.
  o Increase utilization of shuttles, jitneys, and bicycles.
  o Enhance gateways into the community.
  o Enhance public areas with art.
  o Create safe and pleasant pedestrian environments.
  o Link commercial, educational, and cultural activities.
Community Master Plan

• The community master plan asks 10 questions about the Arts and Transit project:
  o Whether it is desirable or necessary to move the Dinky Station from its current location?
  o How desired direct access from University Place and Alexander Street into the Lot #7 Garage and its associated parking lots might best be achieved?
  o How to provide parking for railroad riders as close as possible to the Station?
  o How to manage parking to differentiate and accommodate regular monthly permit commuters, all-day occasional parkers, and partial-day parkers who want to use the train later in the day?
  o How station parking now managed by the Borough might be handled if it is relocated into Princeton Township?
Community Master Plan

- How to provide parking for daytime visitors to the performing and museum spaces expected to be part of the new Arts Center?
- How to provide space for short-term pick-up and drop-off at the station and the nearby Wawa fast-food grocery store?
- How to accommodate taxis, jitneys, buses, and the potential BRT (Bus Rapid Transit) vehicles that would pick up and drop off passengers at the Station?
- How to retain or relocate the attractive older residential-type buildings along Alexander Street that are proposed to be replaced by the Arts Center?
- How to re-develop for mixed use, including housing, the service district along Alexander Road in Princeton Township?
Town Talk

September 24, 2008

A forum for Princeton residents to express opinions about local and national issues

Question of the Week:

“What do you think of the University’s plan for the Arts and Transit Neighborhood?”

“IT looks very interesting. I think that it will make the area much more useable, much more friendly. Also, I think it will encourage people to use the Dinky instead of going to Princeton Junction and parking there. Overall, I think it will serve not just the students, but the whole community.”

Salah El-Shahs, Princeton

“IT looks very ambitious and interesting, but I think it is something that the University can pull off.” Raoul: “This is not the first time that I have been to an open house and seen a plan. I think that it is a great project for the area and the University. Obviously, being a resident, you try to think of ways that it would connect better with the town. I think that this plan will make it easier to go to McCarter, things like that — definitely a positive.”

Carlo (left) and Raoul Momo, Princeton

“It will be tremendous for the arts on campus and I am excited by it. Up to now, the campus has been limited regarding space for the arts, and this will be great.”

Andrea Mirabal, Princeton University

“I think it’s a very beautiful plan. It will really bring the arts into a center point of the University. I just hope that it starts soon. It will change an entry point into the campus and incorporate parts that are now distant places into the core part of campus.”

Joe Ramirez, Princeton University

“It think it’s great, and I hope it will happen soon. It will change the neighborhood and Princeton.”

Veronika Hausle-Kalabacos with (left) Mikyo and Leonidas, Princeton
On behalf of the Board of Trustees and members of the New Jersey Society for Environmental and Economic Development (NJSEED), we strongly support the improvements to the Princeton area proposed by Princeton University. ... We are committed to the belief that economic growth and environmental protection are not mutually exclusive. During these tough economic times, projects like this move New Jersey forward through vital infrastructure development and transportation initiatives that will ultimately bolster both the local economy within Princeton as well as the state economy.

Michael K. Drulis
Executive Director
January, 2011
Zoning

• Everything proposed in this plan can be done within existing zoning except for the construction of the new buildings for the arts. That is why we are here tonight to request a change in zoning.

• New zoning is also needed for the area in the Township south of the Arts and Transit project to accommodate the kind of residential mixed-use neighborhood we have proposed.

We would be pleased to elaborate on any aspects of our presentation or try to answer any questions you might have.