



*East Falls Community Council
PO Box 12672
Philadelphia, PA 19129*

October 24, 2022

Mr. William Bergman
Chair, Zoning Board of Adjustment
1515 Arch Street
18th Floor , Room 18-006
Philadelphia PA 19102

Re: RCO Meeting Decision

Appeal Number: ZP-2022-002701
Project Address: William Penn Charter School
3000 W. Schoolhouse Lane, Philadelphia, PA 19129
Hearing Date: October 26, 2022 , 2pm
Decision taken by RCO: Support

Via email: rcozba@phila.gov

Dear Mr. Bergman;

The William Penn Charter School (Penn Charter) is seeking two variances based on refusals for the following:

- An Educational Facility is prohibited in RSD-3 residential zoning
- The required 488 off street parking spaces have not been provided

The East Falls Community Council (EFCC), which is the coordinating RCO for this matter, has met with Penn Charter and their consultants on November 17, 2021, March 16, 2022, July 20, 2022 and again on September 21, 2022. Meetings were composed of the Penn Charter design team, the EFCC and both near neighbors and the broader East Falls Community. All four meetings were well publicized.

Our general observation during the course of these meetings is that Penn Charter directed their consultants to redesign various portions of the project to enhance the neighborhood, and try to mitigate parking and traffic issues that have been brought up by neighbors. Some of these

traffic issues have been exacerbated during the pandemic and we have found Penn Charter to be responsive and willing to make adjustments to their plans.

As a result of listening to the community, Penn Charter has increased the off-street parking in their plans from 319 to 351 off-street spaces. They have eliminated an access drive from the Oak Road, provided a pedestrian garden and successfully screened the parking with raised berms and plantings. The school has also negotiated leasing additional parking spaces from an adjacent church.

We recommend they include remote parking and a shuttle service in their operational planning to ease parking issues on surrounding streets. Space is available at the nearby former Medical College of Pennsylvania (MCP) and other proximate locations.

Additionally, in support of the neighbor's concerns, we recommend (and Penn Charter has agreed to support) that permit parking be sought for the surrounding streets, should the neighbors agree to that provision – thereby eliminating student parking issues.

The project overall has been sensitively designed, and the overall concept of eliminating vehicular traffic within the campus just makes good sense, especially for the Lower School Campus. We also note that the school has been located in East Falls for a very long time, preceding all of us, and has always strived to be a good neighbor.

On October 24, 2022, a quorum of EFCC zoning committee members voted unanimously in support of the project, with the attendant recommendations as noted above.

Best regards,



Paul M. Elia, AIA

Paul.Elia@Elia-architecture.com

Acting Chair

East Falls Zoning Committee
267.269.3125

cc: Joshua.cohen@phila.gov
suletazba@gmail.com
PCPC.Zoning@Phila.gov
Wpfox3008@verizon.net
Mle.nichols@gmail.com
Hdavidow@penncharter.com
Peter.kelsen@blankrome.com
Fillmore.steve@gmail.com