



STATE OF DELAWARE
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
Budget Development, Planning and Administration
State Planning Coordination

March 1, 2010

Sean Sokolowski
Capital School District
945 Forest Street
Dover, DE 19904

RE: PLUS review – 2010-01-02; Dover High School Site #2

Dear Mr. Sokolowski :

Thank you for meeting with State agency planners on January 27, 2010 to discuss the proposed Dover High School site located at 2161 Forest Avenue in Dover.

According to the information received, you are seeking information regarding the feasibility of purchasing land adjacent to the future Dover High School site for potential fields and/or additional school buildings.

Additionally, these comments reflect only issues that are the responsibility of the agencies represented at the meeting. The school district will also need to comply with any Federal, State and local regulations regarding this property. We also note that as the City of Dover is the governing authority over this land, the developers will need to comply with any and all regulations/restrictions set forth by the City.

Strategies for State Policies and Spending

This property is located in a Level 3 area according to the Strategies for State Policies and Spending. Investment Level 3 reflects areas where growth is anticipated by local, county, and state plans in the longer term future, or areas that may have environmental or other constraints to development. State investments will support growth in these areas, but please be advised that the State may have other priorities in the near term future.

It is noted that this property is adjacent to an existing approved school site, and as such the State has no objections to the inclusion of this parcel with the larger school site. However, please be aware of the following constraints associated with this site:

- A future public roadway will bisect this site, separating much of the 20 acres from the currently approved school site.

- Should the district purchase this property, it should expect to construct all or a portion of the roadway as well as additional infrastructure needed to service this parcel

More information on these items is provided in the agency Recommendations and Additional Information below

Code Requirements/Agency Permitting Requirements

- It is important that the developer be aware of the Delaware Unmarked Human Remains Act of 1987, outlined in Chapter 54 of Title 7 of the Delaware Code, which pertains to the discovery and disposition of such remains. The unexpected discovery of unmarked human remains during construction can result in significant delays while the process is carried out. Therefore, prior to any demolition or ground-disturbing activities, the developer may want to consider hiring an archaeological consultant to examine the parcel for archaeological sites, including a cemetery or unmarked human remains.
- School site approval is required. The Capital School District should initiate the approval of land acquisition letter as required by 29 Del. C. § 7525 as soon as possible.

Recommendations/Additional Information

State Historic Preservation Office

- There are no known historic or cultural resources in this project area, such as archaeological sites or a National Register-Listed property on or near this proposed project site. However, Pomeroy and Beers Atlas of 1868, it appears that there was a house associated with the Rev. C. Huntington either on or very close the parcel. Since Delaware has a strong agricultural heritage, it is a possibility that this house might have been a historic farm and often historic farm have a family cemetery nearby, because small rural, family cemeteries often are found in relation to historic farms complexes.

In addition, our Division request that the development include sufficient landscaping to screen the development from the view of the other existing historic buildings. In addition, if the ditch running through the property will be altered, the school district will probably need an Army Corps of Engineers wetlands permit. If that is the case, the school district will be required to consult with us under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (as amended), and may be required to undertake archaeological testing, depending on the Corps area of jurisdiction. If you have any questions, or would like to discuss these comments further, please contact Terence Burns at 302-736-7404.

DelDOT

- In 2009, the Dover-Kent County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) completed a study of the Route 8 corridor, from Artis Drive (Kent Road 197) to Forest Street (Kent Road 23), and a program of road improvements has been identified.

The Route 8 study recommended the construction of north-south connector roads from Hazletville Road (Kent Road 73) to Route 8 and from Route 8 to Chestnut Grove Road (Kent Road 158). Consistent with that recommendation, we recommend that the District plan for a north-south road through the subject land and/or the west part of the current high school site with the south end connecting to Tribbitt Street in the Village of Cannon Mill. The District should anticipate a requirement that they build this road as a City street as part of their site construction.

The specific alignment of this road and how it would be funded has not been finally determined, but if the District acquires the subject 20 acres they are likely to be asked to fund more of the road construction. Certainly they should expect the road to pass through their site, separating much of the 20 acres from the main high school site. Because of that, the subject 20 acres might be most suitable for a middle school or elementary school campus that would function separately from the high school. The use of it for athletic fields associated with the high school or for a school sharing student facilities with the high school would also be possible with the use of crosswalks and traffic calming. However, planning for any pedestrian crossings should be included in the design of both the road and the campus. DelDOT looks forward to working with the District in these regards.

- Regardless of whether they acquire the subject 20 acres, DelDOT recommends that the District have their engineer maintain contact with the DelDOT Subdivision Manager for the north part of Kent County, Mr. Julio Seneus, as they develop their plans for the high school site further. Mr. Seneus may be reached at (302) 760-2145.

Department of Education

1. The DOE supports locating school facilities on parcels with existing or reasonable access to civil infrastructure to include but not limited to:
 - Roads, pedestrian walkways and shared use paths
 - Waste water/sewerage and domestic water
 - Electric, and telecommunications
 - Storm water drainage and conveyance

School sites with public water and sewer utilities or access to public water and sewer utilities are recommended by DOE over sites requiring on-site facilities.

Because this is a property acquisition to enhance existing property already owned and is yet to be developed the access to adequate civil utilities is available and can be configured as needed.

2. The DOE supports the State Strategies for Policies and Spending. When considering school facility locations, the DOE considers proximity and access to basic support services as a high priority.
Because this is an expansion to an existing property, this school campus site appears that it will have reasonable proximity to support services once fully developed.

3. The DOE supports locating school facilities strategically within the geographic region and/or community the facility is intended to serve in order to:
 - Encourage non-student pedestrian access to the school facility in an effort to reduce vehicle miles traveled to the extent practical
 - Encourage student pedestrian access to the school facility, in order to contain the school's life-cycle operating costs associated with student transportation, as practicable
 - Create education campuses by co-locating educational facilities and services in an effort to reduce life-cycle costs as a result of the co-located schools sharing common spaces, facilities and services.
Because this is an expansion to an existing property, this school campus site appears to be located geographically in close proximity to many of the residents and much of the community it is intended to serve.

4. As a result, the DOE supports the acquisition of this site as an expansion to the Dover High School site with the following qualifications:
 - An initial meeting with DeIDOT, DNREC, Capital School District and the DOE should be scheduled to consider this site and the opportunities for transportation/drainage improvements.
 - The purchase of the site is currently not funded. The purchase of the site must not adversely affect the High School Construction project should the current referendum pass.
 - The Capital School District should also initiate the approval of land acquisition letter as required by 29 Del. C. § 7525 as soon as possible.

Following receipt of this letter and upon filing of an application with the local jurisdiction, the applicant shall provide to the local jurisdiction and the Office of State Planning Coordination a written response to comments received as a result of the pre-application process, noting whether comments were incorporated into the project design or not and the reason therefore.

Thank you for the opportunity to review this project. If you have any questions, please contact me at 302-739-3090.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Constance C. Holland".

Constance C. Holland, AICP
Director

CC: City of Dover