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August 6, 2013

BY HAND and BY EMAIL

Alderman Ted-Hess Mahan
Chairman, Land Use Committee
Newton City Hall
1000 Commonwealth Avenue
Newton, MA 02459-1449

RECEIVED
Newton City Clerk
2013 AUG -6 PM 6:27
David A. Olson, CMC
Newton, MA 02459

Re: Petition #325-06(3)/Russian School of Mathematics/200 Wells Avenue

Dear Alderman Hess-Mahan,

In the Planning Department's Working Session Memorandum dated August 2, 2013, the Planning Department has recommended certain actions relative to the above-entitled application to amend Board Order #325-06. I will respond to each suggestion as follows:

Parking and Drop-Off

1. *That there be no live drop-off in Parking Lot A, which should be reserved for staff and parents walking their children into the building.*

Agreed.

2. *That the three parking stalls closest to Wells Avenue in Parking Lot A be dedicated to staff parking.*

Agreed. In fact we have taken this suggestion a step further and also dedicated the six parking stalls opposite those three stalls to staff parking. Therefore, all of the stalls between the connector driveway and Wells Avenue in Parking Lot A are reserved for staff.

3. *That the petitioner add "Do Not Enter" signs at the exit of the connector driveway into Parking Lot A.*

Agreed. These signs are shown on the site plan.

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4. *That the Board consider a condition that a parking attendant supervise the pick-up and drop-off driveway at all times that classes are in session in order to ensure that patrons are following the established drop-off procedures.*

Agreed.

5. *That any large event anticipated to bring an unusual volume of traffic and parking to the site such as a graduation ceremony or open house include a police detail.*

Agreed.

6. *That the proposed drop-off driveway be constructed with adequate lighting and curbing.*

Agreed.

Lighting Along Wells Avenue

The Planning Department recommends the petitioner add low-level bollard lighting at the driveway entrances/exits along Wells Avenue, along the drop-off driveway, and in the play area if it will be used after dark.

The petitioner does not believe that any such bollard lighting will be necessary. The site lighting report from RW Engineering (a copy of which is enclosed, along with a site plan prepared by VTP Associates, Inc. showing the locations of existing and proposed lighting fixtures) indicates that there is sufficient lighting throughout the site under existing conditions. There is pole lighting at the driveway entrances and exits, and in Parking Lots A and B. The petitioner intends to install either a mix of pole and mounted building lights, or all pole lights if possible, to illuminate the proposed drop-off driveway. The report states that the final design for the proposed drop-off driveway will provide a much greater degree of illumination and effectiveness than would relocation of the existing low-level bollard lighting. Finally, the play area will not be used after dark so it does not need to be illuminated.

Architectural Access

The Inspectional Services Department continues to advocate for the addition of an elevator in the building for access to the second floor. Alternatively, the petitioner may be able to seek a waiver from the Architectural Access Board.

The petitioner agrees to install an elevator if the Architectural Access Board so requires.

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In addition, the Director of Transportation, William G. Paille, made several suggestions in his memorandum to the Planning Department dated August 2, 2013. I will respond to each suggestion as follows:

1. *There is concern for vehicles entering 'Parking Lot A' and not having sufficient space to reverse direction after dropoff/pickup or if there are no parking spaces. It is recommended the last two spots at the westerly end of the parking lot be reserved for this purpose.*

The Zoning Ordinances require 62 parking spaces for the proposed use. There are exactly 62 parking spaces onsite, so we can't remove those two parking spaces from our plan without a parking waiver, which we have not requested. However, we would not be opposed to a condition restricting the use of these two spaces, since we do not feel that they are necessary from an operational perspective.

2. *There is no connection sidewalk from 'Parking Lot A' to the side of the building that is adjacent to the new connector road. This could facilitate dropoff/pickup operations and should be considered.*

Adding a connection sidewalk as suggested above would require the removal of a large amount of landscaped area, which the petitioner prefers not to do. Furthermore, the petitioner has elected to utilize the entrance closest to Lot B for students who are dropped off along the connector road. The parking attendant will be directing children to that entrance. Facilitating an alternative approach into the building could create an unsafe and confusing situation for children since there will not be an attendant on the Lot A side of the building. Accordingly, the petitioner would prefer not to install a connection sidewalk in that location.

3. *It appears the proposed width of the new connector road is approximately 20 feet. What measures are being implemented to prevent speeding along this road and to ensure all traffic stops to allow pedestrians to cross safely?*

The new connector road is 14 feet wide, as shown on the site plan (a copy of which is enclosed herewith) and also noted in the Planning Department's August 2, 2013 memorandum. There will be an attendant supervising the driveway at all times that classes are in session, and any children who are crossing the driveway to access the proposed play area will be escorted by an additional staff member.

4. *Will the crosswalk location be handicapped accessible?*

Yes.

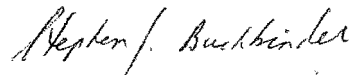
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Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns respecting the foregoing. Best wishes.

Sincerely,



Stephen J. Buchbinder

SJB/mer
enclosures

cc: (By Hand and By Email, w/enclosures)
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Alderman Susan S. Albright
Alderman John W. Harney
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Alderman Gregory R. Schwartz
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