TOWN OF WELLESLEY MASSACHUSETTS

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
TOWN HALL WELLESLEY, MA 02181

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ZBA 89-73
Petition of Wellesley College
Science Center Addition/Wellesley College Campus

Pursuant to due notice, the Permit Granting Authority and the Special Permit Granting Authority held a Public Hearing on Thursday, December 21, 1989 at 8 p.m. in the Selectmen's Meeting Room (Conference Room B) of the Town Hall, 525 Washington Street, Wellesley, on the petition of WELLESLEY COLLEGE requesting a Special Permit for Site Plan Approval pursuant to Section XVIA, Section VII, Section XIVE and Section XXV of the Zoning Bylaw to allow renovation of the existing Science Center and construction of a 14,900 square foot addition to said Science Center on the WELLESLEY COLLEGE CAMPUS in an Educational and a Water Supply Protection District. A variance from the terms of Section XX and pursuant to the provisions of Section XXIV-D of the Zoning Bylaw is also requested to allow the height of said addition to exceed the maximum allowed height of 3 stories or 45 feet.

On November 30, 1989, the petitioner requested a hearing before this Board and thereafter due notice of the hearing was given by mailing and publication.

Presenting the case at the hearing was Barry Monahan, Assistant Vice President, Wellesley College, who introduced Gordon Jacobs, Director of the Office of Facilities Planning; Charles Rogers and Michael Sullivan, architects with Perry, Dean, Rogers; and Ken Charest, Sanitary Engineer with R.W. Sullilvan.

Gordon Jacobs said that the college needs the addition to the Science Center to keep current in the science field, particularly in regard to Physics and Computer Science. The location of the addition is most the most economical and compact way of adding to the Center, as the addition will be an infill to an existing courtyard. The height variance is requested as the addition would not be higher than the buildings to which it will be attached, and to construct a smaller building would be uneconomical. He added that no additional parking is required.

Charles Rogers presented a model of the Science Center with the proposed addition and elevations showing the comparative heights of Sage Hall (the Science Center) and the proposed addition. The design of the building is primarily a closed function building for physics and computer science, having windows only in the offices.

Michael Sullivan presented a color photograph of the facade of the addition, which will be faced with white gravalume. The Board questioned whether the concern of the Design Review Board regarding the use of gravalume at ground and eye level had been considered. Mr. Rogers said that they had revised sketches showing the concrete extending higher and would be meeting with the Design Review Board again.

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Statement of Facts

The site in question is located on the Wellesley College Campus in an Educational and a Water Supply Protection District. A Special Permit for Site Plan Approval is requested for renovation of the existing Science Center and construction of a proposed 14,900 square foot addition with a floor area of 41,006 which would be attached to the existing Science Center as an infill to an existing courtyard. The primary use of the addition would be to house the physics and computer science facilities. The exterior of the addition would be faced with white gravalume.

A variance is requested pursuant to Section XX of the Zoning Bylaw to allow the addition to exceed the allowed height of 45 feet, or 3 stories. The addition would be 67 feet tall, or four stories; the fourth floor to be used to contain the necessary mechanicals.

The following plans were submitted: unsigned, undated Existing Site Features (A-1); Topographical Plan (C-1), dated 11/29/73, drawn by Robert W. Foster, Registered Land Surveyor; Grading Plan (C-2), dated 2/19/74, drawn by Mason Frey, Registered Landscape Architect; unsigned, undated Plot Plan (A-2); Utilities Site Plan (P.1.1) dated 11/21/89, drawn by A. Eugene Sullivan, Professional Sanitary Engineer; Grading and Drainage Plan (P 1.2) dated 11/21/89, drawn by A. Eugene Sullivan, Professional Sanitary Engineer. The following plans, all undated and stamped by Charles Rogers, Registered Architect: First Floor Plan (A-5), Second Floor, Site Development & Landscaping Plans (A-6), Third Floor (A-7), Penthouse/Fourth Floor (A-8), Roof Plan (A-10), Exterior Elevations (A-11), Exterior Elevations (A-12), Wall Sections (A-13) were submitted. An unsigned, undated Subsurface Plan (A-14) and an unsigned, undated Site Cross Section Plan (A-15) were submitted.

An Official Development Prospectus, an Inventory of existing stored chemicals and their amounts, and a Groundwater Observation Well Report prepared by New Hampshire Boring were also submitted.

The Design Review Board held a preliminary review on November 9 and a final review on December 14, 1989. At the final review, the Board remained concerned about the appropriateness of the metal exterior, and particularly about its use at ground or eye level. The Board voted to approve the concept of the plan with the recommendations that another material be used on the bottom level of the addition and that large plant materials be used in the courtyard. The Board and the applicants agreed to meet again for further discussion, if site plan approval is granted.

Site plans and other submission materials were sent to the Planning Board, Wetlands Protection Committee, Town Engineer, Board of Health and Fire Chief, as required by Section XVIA of the Zoning Bylaw. Written responses from the aforesaid were received and are on file in the Board of Appeals office.

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The Planning Board, on December 12, 1989, voted to offer no objection to Site Plan Approval and no objection to the height variance request as the alternative of exposed rooftop mechanical equipment, which is exempt from the height limit, is less desirable.

Decision

This Authority has made a careful study of the evidence submitted. Wellesley College proposes renovation to the existing Science Center and construction of an addition approximately 14,900 square feet, which constitutes a major construction project under Section XVIA of the Zoning Bylaw because it includes construction of 2,500 or more square feet of gross floor area and is pursuant to Section XIVE because the site is located in a Water Supply Protection District. The petitioner is also requesting a variance from Section XX of the Zoning Bylaw for the height of the addition to be allowed at 67 feet.

It is the opinion of this Authority that, except for the variance requested, the project, as shown on the submitted plans noted in the foregoing Statement of Facts, complies with Section XVIA, Section XIVE, Section XII, and Section XXII of the Zoning Bylaw. Therefore, the Special Permit for Site Plan Approval is hereby granted pursuant to Section XXV of the Zoning Bylaw.

Regarding the variance requested, it is the opinion of this Authority that because of the size of the building, and the precedent height of the existing Science Center, a literal enforcement of the provisions of Section XX of the Zoning Bylaw would involve a substantial hardship to the petitioner and that desirable relief may be granted without substantially derogating from the intent or purpose of the Zoning Bylaw.

Therefore, the requested variance is granted to construct an addition to the existing Science Center, said addition to have a height of 67 feet, as shown on the plans submitted and noted in the foregoing Statement of Facts.

The Inspector of Buildings is hereby authorized to issue a permit for the construction upon his receipt and approval of a building application and construction plans and subject to the conditions attached hereto as Addendum A.

APPEALS TO THIS DECISION, IF ANY, SHALL BE MADE PURSUANT TO GENERAL LAWS, CHAPTER 40A, SECTION 17, AND SHALL BE FILED WITHIN 20 DAYS AFTER THE DATE OF FILING OF THIS DECISION IN THE OFFICE OF THE TOWN CLERK.

John A. Donovan, Jr., Chairman

Kendall P. Bates

Robert R. Cunningham

cc: Planning Board
Design Review Board
Wetlands Protection Committee
Board of Health
Inspector of Buildings

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ADDENDUM A

1. That documentation by a Sanitary Engineer that the existing sewer pipes are in satisfactory working condition be submitted to the office of the Board of Appeals prior to the issuance of a Building Permit.

2. That documentation regarding the materials to be used for new sewer piping and their adequacy to withstand lab waste disposal be submitted to the office of the Board of Appeals prior to the issuance of a Building Permit.

3. That documentation stating that soils in the location of the leaching pits for roof drainage demonstrate leaching capacity capable of meeting Board of Health standards be submitted to the Board of Health and the office of the Board of Appeals prior to the issuance of a Building Permit.

4. That a final plan detailing the facade of the addition and a landscape plan of the courtyard be submitted to the office of the Board of Appeals if changes are enacted subsequent to any meeting with the Design Review Board.

5. That all work shall be performed in accordance with plans submitted and on file with this Authority.

6. That all design and construction must comply with all applicable state and local codes.

7. That all necessary permits required by the Department of Environmental Protection and/or the Massachusetts Water Resource Authority be obtained.

8. That all requirements of the Town of Wellesley Fire Department shall be complied with.

9. That all requirements of the Department of Public Works shall be met, including but not limited to the requirement that water, sewer and electric connections, together with drainage connections, be made in accordance with DPW standards and installed and maintained at no cost to the Town of Wellesley.

10. That a complete set of Site Utility Plans be submitted to the Department of Public Works.

11. That a copy of the Occupancy Permit issued by the Inspector of Buildings shall be submitted to this Authority at the time of issuance.

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