



# Providence City Plan Commission

DAVID N. CICILLINE  
Mayor

August 10, 2006

Anna M. Stetson, City Clerk  
Office of the City Clerk  
Providence City Hall  
25 Dorrance Street  
Providence, RI 02903

**Re: Notice of Approval, Brown University Institutional Master Plan**

Dear Ms. Stetson:

At a regular meeting of the City Plan Commission on Monday, July 24, 2006, and pursuant to Section 503 of the City of Providence Zoning Ordinance Chapter 1994-24, No. 365, as amended, the Commission reviewed the Institutional Master Plan for Brown University. The Commission voted unanimously as described below to make certain findings of fact and to approve the master plan subject several conditions.

**Findings of Fact**

The Commission made the following findings of fact:

1. The Brown University Master Plan is consistent with the applicable regulations contained in the Zoning Ordinance
2. The proposed Master Plan is consistent with the applicable goals and policies contained in Section 4.1, U4, Institutional Use, of the City's Comprehensive Plan.

**Conditions of Approval**

The Institutional Master Plan was approved subject to the following conditions:

1. Any expansion of the campus for educational and school-related functions to additional structures and/or property beyond the existing campus shall require an amendment to this plan and shall be subject to all other requirements of the Zoning Ordinance.
2. "The Walk" - The inclusion of pedestrian crossing signals at Angell and Waterman Streets will be a condition of approval. Brown University shall also work with the City's Traffic Engineer on the synchronization of traffic lights and the pedestrian signals. The

cost of upgrading traffic signals to allow for synchronization shall be born by Brown University, unless such work has already been funded through another mechanism. Additionally, Brown will also provide a temporary crossing guard to establish pedestrian habits on Angell and Waterman for a period of 3 months following construction of the walk, or if completed during the summer, starting with the fall term. If pedestrian crossings occur mid-block to the detriment of traffic flow subsequent to the elimination of the crossing guards, Brown University (upon written notice from the City's Traffic Engineer) will install landscaping and fencing along property lines adjacent to Angell and Waterman Streets to eliminate any incentives for mid-block crossings.

3. Olive Street - Pursuant to the analysis contained in this report, the proposed abandonment of Olive Street does not meet the criteria for abandonment. However, a request to eliminate on-street parking would be supported.
4. Meeting Street - Meeting Street between Brown and Thayer streets was temporarily converted to a one-way street in 1993 to accommodate commercial construction, and has since remained one-way in use, if not by resolution. The Traffic Engineering Department's primary objection to the street reverting to two-way use is that the conversion would entail the elimination of existing on-street parking due to prohibitive street widths. Brown University must work with the neighborhood and the business community in the Thayer Street area through the parking group to investigate whether Meeting Street should be one-way or two-way. A City Council resolution should be made as to whether it will be a one-way or two-way street.
5. Neighborhood Coordination - To ensure that the neighborhood is aware of significant projects, Brown needs to establish a mechanism for informing the College Hill Neighborhood Association (CHNA) of significant projects, including timeframes for street closures, construction timeframes, etc.
6. Building Names - Building names, and any building details, such as for Sidney Frank Hall shall be corrected and updated where applicable.
7. Construction Coordination - The Department of Planning and Development is in the process of coordinating a sub-committee of the Providence Area Traffic Committee (which includes representatives of RIDOT, the City of Providence, RI Hospital, and private consultants) to address College Hill construction-related traffic issues. Representatives from the various institutions (Brown, Wheeler, Moses Brown) that are working on substantial construction projects on College Hill will be included in the subcommittee to ensure that coordination of project timing to minimize impacts on traffic flow throughout College Hill. A crucial role of such a sub-committee will be notification of and, to some extent, negotiation of construction timelines, periods of high activity, temporary street closings, etc. Brown's participation in such a sub-committee or task force shall be a condition of Master Plan approval.
8. Parking - As with other neighborhoods surrounding educational institutions, the issue of on-street parking and the impact it has on neighborhood residents and merchants in on-going. The concerns addressed by the CHNA with regard to the proposed fitness center

reflect just one of many concerns that exist. To address the larger impacts of on-street parking in the neighborhood, a working group will be created to study the issue and recommend measures to mitigate the impacts of on-street parking, including looking at alternatives for transportation demand management. The working group shall include representatives of the City, Brown University, Rhode Island School of Design, The Wheeler School, Moses Brown, and the CHNA. Parking for construction workers on large projects should be off site, while small projects should provide parking on site. The details should be developed through the proposed parking sub-committee.

9. Nelson Fitness Center - With regard to the loss of spaces that will result from the construction of the fitness center, Brown University shall be required to specifically identify the events where parking needs will exceed the supply in the complex and provide specific mitigation measures to ensure that parking for those events does not rely on the on-street parking supply. These mitigation measures must be submitted to the Department of Planning and Development and approved by the Director prior to issuance of a building permit for the fitness center.
10. Streetscape Improvements - Brown shall work with the Department of Planning and Development as well as other applicable city departments (Public Works, Parks, Traffic Engineering) to implement streetscape improvements. The streetscape improvements shall also be coordinated through the traffic committee to minimize traffic impacts on the surrounding street network.
11. New Construction - All new construction shall relate to the surrounding neighborhood in terms of massing and scale, orientation of buildings with entrances and windows along street edges and orientation of loading and service areas internal to the site or appropriate screening if they cannot be located internal to the site. Brown shall coordinate with the Department of Planning and Development to ensure that the design of new structures are consistent with these guidelines.
12. Timetable for Sale of Properties - Brown will work with the City to establish a realistic timetable for the dispensation of the eight buildings targeted for sale. This will help alleviate concerns about “mothballing” properties, leading to neglect and potential detriment to neighboring property values, as well as ensuring timely returns to the tax base.
13. Master Plan Update - This master plan shall be in effect until December 31, 2010. Brown University shall file an update to the plan for approval by the City Plan Commission prior to that date. Failure to update the Master Plan shall preclude the issuance of any building permits.

The approval of the City Plan Commission shall be bound into the Institutional Master Plan by the applicant. Five (5) copies of the document are to be filed with the Department of Planning and Development.

The applicant shall place a public notice of this decision in a newspaper of general circulation in Providence.

Copies of the plan are available for public review at the office of the City Plan Commission, Department of Planning and Development, 400 Westminster Street, 5<sup>th</sup> floor, during normal business hours.

**Please post this notice for 20 days.**

Note that this action does not require any action by the City Council.

Sincerely,

Christopher J. Ise  
Administrative Officer

cc: Michael McCormick, Brown University  
William Bombard, Acting Director, Department of Inspection and Standards