

**WENTWORTH INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY  
COMMUNITY TASK FORCE MEETING  
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1, 2009**

**MINUTES**

**Task Force Members Present:** Cynthia Brophy, Robert Chambers, Susan D'Amato,  
Patricia Flaherty, Sheneal Parker

**Guests:** Patrick Cunningham, Perkins+Will  
Tim Marsters, Perkins+Will  
Johanna Sena, Office of City Councilor Michael Ross  
Katelyn Sullivan, Boston Redevelopment Authority  
Noel Roycroft, Office of Representative Jeffrey Sanchez

**Wentworth Representatives:** LeMar Brown, Public Safety  
Jamie Kelly, Manager, Media & Public Relations  
Kevin Moore, Director, Public Safety  
Mary Ollinger, Assistant, Business & Finance  
Sandy Pascal, AVP, Community Relations & External Affairs  
David A. Wahlstrom, AVP, Business  
Annamaria Wenner, AVP, Student Affairs  
Dick Towle, President, Fallon Towle & Associates

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Katelyn Sullivan called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. Attendees introduced themselves.

Dick Towle began noting that the goal of the meeting is to discuss student behavior issues, emphasizing that the focus will be on Wentworth and that we would truly like it to be a *discussion*. Pat said the meeting should have been better advertised, and reiterated that the Institutional Master Plan and student behavior conversations need to be integrated. Dick responded that student behavior will be an ongoing issue at task force meetings; for this meeting, we wanted to get feedback from people who have been working with the Institute. He added that the intent was not to exclude anyone from the conversation. Pat reiterated that Wentworth should really be reaching into the neighborhood and inviting participation.

Sheneal Parker agreed that we should be advertising, but asked for clarification about the relationship between student behavior and the IMP as well as the task force's role. Katelyn said that the task force was put together to advise the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) and Wentworth during the IMP process. She added that student conduct is a side issue, but it still needs to be talked about. Pat replied that the IMP process is about more than projects; it is about planning and impact of the Institute on the neighborhood. Again, noting the need for conversations about student behavior and the IMP to be integrated, not separated. Dick said he agreed completely, saying that a major part of Wentworth's master plan is to draw students on campus for both housing and entertainment; we want to take steps to mitigate problems. He added that student citizen relations and community relations are a major component as well. At this point, he suggested Annamaria Wenner talk briefly about what Wentworth is currently doing.

Annamaria began by saying that as a result of feedback from the task force and research about students living on campus, freshman *and sophomores* will be required to live on campus beginning with the incoming 2010 class. She explained that students perform at a higher rate and do better in the community when they live on campus. She continued, saying that in the past couple years, there has been more marketing to parents about living on-campus, adding that parents of millennial students are looking for safety and the most “bang for their buck.” Annamaria noted that we are already seeing the effects, reporting that housing assignments for returning students jumped from 1059 to 1131 this year, 52 of which are off-campus students who have decided to move back on campus. She said she attributes this to their focus on parents, and explained some of their strategies:

- Information was sent home with students in December; that is typically when conversations happen with parents and when housing decisions are made.
- Housing deadline was moved to *before* spring break so students would not have another opportunity to sway their parents.
- Students incur a \$1,000 fine for breaking housing agreement (with the exception of coop students who find work outside the commuting area); looking at increasing it to \$2,000. Dollars collected from these fines go towards weekend programming.

Cindy asked if Wentworth communicates with the BPD regularly. Dick explained that information is shared on a weekly basis. Wentworth keeps track of all students that get in trouble, and there is follow-up with the Dean of Students. Additionally, LeMar Brown participates in Ride Alongs with the BPD; any incidents go straight to the Dean. Problem Properties get extra attention.

Sheneal asked if the majority of problems are in Mission Hill. LeMar said that the majority of the attention goes into Mission Hill, adding that Allston/Brighton is another popular area.

Cindy asked where our students come from. Dick replied that our information is good, but that it could be better. He explained that Wentworth is implementing a process where students' addresses are confirmed at every point of contact with the Institute to ensure that we have current, accurate information. He added that it is really to our benefit to know where our students live, adding that this is a major priority right now. Cindy asked if we had a list, and Dick replied that we do, noting that we submit the Accountability Ordinance to the City every semester. Sheneal asked how many students we have living in Mission Hill, and Dick responded it was in the low 200s, but that we would get the number. Cindy asked if we could bring further data to the next meeting.

Dick noted that the Accountability Ordinance is public, but that as we mentioned, the data is flawed and we are trying to resolve those issues. Annamaria added that we also intend to contact parents about their child's local address to have them confirm its accuracy. She added that we do not allow apartment solicitations to be posted on campus, and while Wentworth acknowledges the Colleges of the Fenway Real Estate Fair, we do not participate. She explained that there are ongoing communications with the parents, particularly about the pros of living on campus and the new legislation limited students in an apartment. Annamaria distributed a draft letter she is sending to the parents of students who have not yet deposited for housing. Sandy noted that the real estate agents often mislead the parents. Annamaria continued that we try to be very clear about the law and emphasize it in the communications with parents.

Sheneal asked if we could get the number of students living in the greater Boston area. Dick responded that we have approximately 2,800 full-time students; of those, 1,932 of those live on

campus. He noted that with the addition of the 265 beds in the proposed dorm, we could accommodate all local students who require housing, adding that if other schools are interested we could add up to three floors as part of a joint venture. He said that right now, we are trying to get better information on those 200+ students and where they'd be coming from.

Cindy asked if, as we move on, we would be willing to put our intentions about the Master Plan in writing. Dick said that it would all be in the IMP document. He explained that enrollment projections stay approximately level, give or take 5% increase (approx 100 students); with the 18-year-old demographic decreasing, the goal is keep enrollment at the current level and become more competitive. He noted that there are no plans for facilities expansion that would accommodate more students, adding that the goal is not to add capacity but to better serve the current students. He acknowledged the apartment-style plans for the proposed dorm, and the full-year housing option current available to students.

Pat asked what the cost per student per month is with the full-year option. Annamaria said it was reasonable, but said we would bring the exact information to the next meeting.

Pat asked if we will be renting beds to Emmanuel this Fall. Dick said it does not look like beds will be available, and Pat asked for the numbers. Annamaria we would provide them after the deadline (May 1<sup>st</sup>), adding that students who drop out of housing at this point have typically been academically dismissed.

Dick suggested LeMar talk a little bit about what he does for those who might not know. LeMar explained that he goes on the Ride Arounds on Friday and Saturday nights with the BPD and handles 911 calls or Problem Property hotline calls in the Mission Hill area. He added that students who get arrested or cited from Wentworth get cited by him, and then go into Wentworth's judicial process. He added that he visits these students on Mondays and Thursdays to follow up. Pat noted that there are still parties. Sandy said that despite the great work Wentworth has done, the volume of students continues to increase in Mission Hill. She added that we really want to focus on our students.

Pat asked if there is any additional pressure for moving problem students out of the neighborhood, adding that it is both the student behavior issue and an affordable housing issue. She explained that hundreds of families have been displaced since 2000. She noted that this past weekend was particularly bad, adding that she was home with the flu and witnessed it firsthand. She noted that, while Wentworth students are not the only problem, Wentworth behavior has certainly been deplorable and unique.

Annamaria said that Wentworth does parental notifications when students get in trouble, adding that most parents are very receptive. She said that unfortunately, when charges are dropped, there is no longer overwhelming evidence for disciplinary action. She recently offered a student the option to move on campus or be suspended, and he/she chose to move on campus. She emphasized the importance of working with the parents, especially for this generation. Pat said that we should show the parents videos of what happens on the Hill, and Annamaria replied that she showed them a video of the celebrations after the Celtics win.

Dick noted that having a venue is not the answer, but it will make an impact. Pat said that there is no simple answer, having dealt with it for nearly a decade. She noted that there is a burst of activity around 3am, and asked about Campus Center hours and funds for programming. Annamaria said we envision a 24/7 operation; Dave added that the design studios don't close until 2am. Annamaria explained that we have a Student Event Board that has been very agreeable to moving Monday-Thursday activities to Thursday-Saturday. She added that money is available and funding would not be an issue. Dave said it is having an appropriate facility to

host these activities. Dick added that in addition to mitigating behavior, it will create a more positive experience on campus.

Dick explained that at by the next meeting (which we'll advertise), we will be further with programming and design and will provide more information about the Campus Center. He added that by that time, they will have seen a copy of the IMP Notification Form (IMPNF) which we are filing on Monday. Dick quickly ran through the proposed projects: (1) Campus Center (4,600 SF, located on the tennis courts); (2) Annex Addition; (3) Dormitory (265 beds, located at the corner of Louis Prang/Vancouver); (4) relocate Sweeney Field with underground parking; and (5) future land use of Sweeney field for potential commercial development. Currently, we are not seeking approvals as we do not have enough details to make it a proposed project. Pat asked if the Campus Center could still be built without the resources from that development. Dick said that it could, and the intention is actually to be in construction a year from now, perhaps earlier.

Dick reviewed the IMP schedule, noting that because of Passover, the IMPNF Comment Period has been extended from 30 to 45 days.

Monday, April 6th	File IMPNF
Wednesday, May 13	Task Force Meeting w/ the Public
Thursday, May 21	End of Comment Period
Monday, June 8	Scoping Issued
Monday, August 10	File IMP
Monday, October 12	End of Comment Period
Thursday, November 12	BRA Board Meeting (Public Hearing)
Tuesday, December 8	Zoning

Cindy asked if the community has seen what we are proposing in the IMP. Dick explained that the Campus Center has changed, adding that because of the size it is only subject to small project review. Pat said she did not think the parameters had been vetted through the community. Dick replied that all the details would be in the plan, and that they would have a chance to react.

Cindy asked about the dorm being proposed on the green space (525 Huntington). Dick explained that when the property was purchased, it was not in the Master Plan so Wentworth had to file an amendment. It was approved as an open-space until a final use was determined. Pat added that that happened very recently. Dick pointed out the plans for a dorm on 634 Huntington, and said that 525 is a superior location for a residence hall—it doesn't have to be as high and is a more efficient use of space. Cindy voiced her concern about continuously absorbing students into the neighborhood. Dick said that Wentworth's intentions are to keep enrollment numbers relatively stable, and ultimately bring students *out* of the neighborhood. Pat said that the other site would be much less controversial, and Dick replied that it would be much harder to make that site work financially. Dick also noted that with the 525 location so close to 555, there will be additional staff presence. Cindy commented that of all the neighborhoods in Boston, Fenway has the most students.

There was a brief discussion about the neighborhood meetings that were held in June and October about the campus master plan. It was noted the information that came out of those meetings continued to be integrated into the master plan throughout its evolution. Cindy asked for this information.

Pat noted that other institutions have presented their IMPs to specific community groups, and she asked if Wentworth could present to MHNHS, open to others. She also encouraged

Wentworth to hold other meetings in the neighborhood. Sheneal said we could present at the Fenway CDC Board Meeting. There was a brief discussion about scheduling, and Sandy said she would follow up to confirm dates.

Patrick Cunningham spoke very briefly about the Campus Center, saying that they are right in the middle of concept design. They are working with Dave and Annamaria to define the program, and looking at the architecture in a way that will really draw people in. He added that they want to make the spaces flexible so they can be adjusted as interests change. He noted that they would give a more thorough presentation at the April 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:15pm. The next Community Task Force meeting is on April 22<sup>nd</sup> at 6pm in the Faculty/Staff Dining Room (Beatty Hall). There will be a public meeting about the Institutional Master Plan on May 13<sup>th</sup>, also at 6pm in the Faculty/Staff Dining Room.