

July 29, 2014

Mr. William J. Bolla, Esquire  
McNamara, Bolla, and Panzer  
116 East Court Street  
Doylestown, PA 18901-4321

RE: Villanova CICD Conditional Use  
**Review No. 1**  
RETTEW Project No. 101442003

Dear Bill:

We have completed our review of the above referenced plan as prepared by Nave Newell, Inc. Our review was of the following information received on July 15, 2014:

1. Thirteen (13) plan sheets dated May 2, 2014.

**Project Overview:**

<u>Applicant:</u>	Villanova University
<u>Requested Action/Use:</u>	CICD Conditional Use Review
<u>Zoning District:</u>	PI – Planned Institutional; CO-Commercial Office
<u>Location and Size:</u>	CICD Conditional Use Property is located between Lancaster Avenue and the SEPTA R-100 tracks, and between Pike Field and Moriarty Hall on the Villanova campus, a gross site area of approximately 13.81 acres.
<u>Existing Use:</u>	Surface parking lots
<u>Proposed Use:</u>	Student dormitories, Performing Arts Center, Parking Structure, and student-centered retail.

We have performed a general compliance review of the conditional use plans with the Radnor Township Comprehensive Land Plan, and have also included overview comments on highlight issues at this point. We will have additional comments as the Conditional Use application moves through the review process and when more detailed land development plans are submitted.



### **TOWNSHIP COMPREHENSIVE PLAN CONSISTENCY REVIEW**

1. Under the Institutional Use Section 8 of the Radnor Township Comprehensive Plan, which was last updated in 2003, it is stated that Villanova University has prioritized a number of plans and projects moving forward. The Comprehensive Plan acknowledges the University's intention of implementing several major building projects, most of which will be in the form of student housing, while maintaining the status quo enrollment figures. Reducing the need for off campus housing, improving the quality of student life, and minimizing community issues occurring due to a large number of students living off campus are presented as key reasons for the need to build additional residential facilities.
2. The Comprehensive Plan lays out some general principles which are to be kept in mind when dealing with Institutional land use. For example, the expansion of institutions is to be limited to the areas within the present boundaries of the campus zoned for Institutional use. The University's CICD plan does not expand the current limits of the campus, although the proposed development activity does extend beyond the PI - Planned Institutional zoning district in the form of the 'West Lancaster Parking' area proposed for University property in the CO – Commercial Office zoning district.
3. Further, the Comprehensive Plan asks that existing institutions be harmonized with adjacent land uses by promoting physical buffering. Villanova's plans include the installation of deciduous trees, evergreens, shrubs, and ground cover along most of the CICD district boundaries. To properly buffer adjoining properties, existing buffer vegetation needs to be fully retained along with the addition of new vegetation and landscaping.
4. In the Institutional Use section, the Comprehensive Plan specifically recognizes that an important issue to the community relates to Villanova's long range plans for its land holdings south of Lancaster Avenue that contain the Main and Pike surface parking lots. The Comprehensive Plan notes that the University has considered the development of a major convocation center there, including a bookstore plus structured parking with related facilities, very similar to that proposed under the CICD Conditional Use. Features of such a development were to include possible application of traffic calming, gateway enhancements, and other appearance improvements.
5. The project needs to be consistent with the goals and objectives as stated in Section 2 – Environmental and Natural Resources of the Radnor Township Comprehensive Plan Update. The plan contains a goal to "protect the Township's vital environmental values, including water resources, wetlands, floodplains and riparian areas, woodlands and important habitat areas, balancing the needs of development with environmental values" with objectives to "direct development to areas of minimum environmental sensitivity; prohibit development in areas of heightened sensitivity and value, such as wetlands, floodplains, riparian zones, and steep slopes" and "manage water resources, both water quality and water quantity, especially through a program of improved stormwater management." (2-1)
6. Section 5 – Transportation and Circulation Plan of the Comprehensive Plan outlines an Access Management Program that "should apply to all roads in the Township, as practical. Reducing the amount of unnecessary curb cuts and access points can also help to reduce delays in traffic flow,

accident levels, and pedestrian conflicts” (5-29). The University’s plan includes the elimination of several existing access points along Lancaster Avenue at the West Lancaster Parking area properties.

7. The stormwater policy as laid out in the Comprehensive Plan for the Wayne Business District, and more generally, in Section 10 – Existing Land Use and Land Use Plan of the Radnor Township Comprehensive Plan Update calls for the design of Business District elements to include “subsurface stormwater infiltration systems, ‘feeding’ the new landscaping and overflowing into the groundwater” (10-22). Villanova has indicated in its preliminary stormwater narrative that the use of rain gardens is anticipated throughout the project to maximize stormwater infiltration and absorption.

### **GENERAL PLANNING REVIEW**

1. Sufficient buffering to the satisfaction of the Township needs to be required along the R-100 boundaries as well as along the lands behind the proposed Performing Arts Center and the proposed parking structure facing toward Barley Cone lane.
2. Stormwater improvements to address known stormwater management problems on-site and involving downstream conveyance and discharge points, and to improve both stormwater volume and water quality aspects need to be made part of the project to the satisfaction of the Township.
3. It appears that the University’s Traffic Impact Study does not follow PennDOT’s traffic impact study methodology. This may require the University to have significant portions of the study redone and could cause changes to the study results and traffic improvements obligations. For example, transportation system capacity analysis needs to be redone. Average peak hours overall for the project sites were used instead of the specific worst case peak hour for each intersection. No traffic recommendations, decisions, or agreements should be accepted or made until the revised traffic impact study is prepared and reviewed.
4. A third, dedicated right-turn lane needs to be added to the plan for eastbound Lancaster Avenue turning south onto Ithan Avenue headed toward the proposed parking structure. This will allow two full lanes for through traffic on Lancaster Avenue, especially during special events, and help keep traffic moving and the intersection clear. As more traffic gets through on a normal traffic signal cycle, this may free up more time in the overall traffic signal cycle for pedestrian crossing at the intersection, making pedestrian crossing safer too.

Should you have any questions or require any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact us at any time.

Sincerely,



Stephen R. Gabriel, PP  
Township Planning Consultant

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Villanova CICD Conditional Use

copy: Steve Norcini, Public Works Director  
Suzan Jones  
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