



MEETING: Site Review Committee
SUBJECT: Confucius Institute
ADDRESS: 756 Finch Court

LOCATION: City Hall
DATE: April 2, 2013

PRELIMINARY SITE REVIEW

IN ATTENDANCE:

Tyler Kent, Asst. City Planner	(219) 462-1161
Tim Burkman, Engineering Director	(219) 462-1161
Ed Pilarski, Water Reclamation Dept.	(219) 464-4973
Mark Geskey, Water Dept.	(219) 462-6174
Vicki Thrasher, Building Commissioner	(219) 462-1161
Jack Johnson, Fire Department	(219) 462-8325
Matt Evans, Public Works	(219) 462-4612
Media	

PRESENTERS:

Fred Plant, Valparaiso University
 (219) 464-5436 / fred.plant@valpo.edu

Email addresses for the above City of Valparaiso Departments can be found at www.valpo.us.

The following is a summary of discussion at this meeting:

OPENING: The Site Review Committee met to discuss a proposed Kent stated that site review is not an approval. Rather, it is a preliminary discussion of the requirements and issues to be considered by the developer or owner. It is possible it will need to come back before site review or to seek other approvals.

EXPLANATION OF PROJECT: The Confucius Institute is being relocated from 1404 LaPorte Avenue to 756 Finch Court. The new location was at one time a single family home. The University was going to demolish this house, but then thought it would be a good use for the Institute. The building is approximately 2,500 sq. ft. not counting the garage and is Bedford Stone. There are three bedrooms. The building will be used as is. No construction alteration will be done. Plant understands the location is zoned for Campus and believes they are in compliance. Plant indicated the bedrooms will be used as offices. The dining space in the kitchen area will be used for instructional purposes. The living room will be used by 10 to 12 students for instruction. The more formal dining room will be turned into a library. Plant stated there will be no overnight stays at this location. The office areas will be used during the day by faculty members. All the students are undergraduate students. Some of the students drive and some of the students walk. The City is in the process of vacating Finch Court to the ownership of the University. There is a cul-de-sac at the end of the street with a vacant house next to it. There appears to be adequate parking available. Plant indicated the State Design Release has been received. The State has also conducted an inspection of the property.

STAFF COMMENTS:

THRASHER: Thrasher indicated she has received the State Construction Design Release. A Building Permit is not required. Thrasher stated a fire inspection is required before the facility is occupied. Signage will require a permit.

BURKMAN: Burkman indicated his main concern was the number of students who will be walking from campus to the Institute. Burkman asked for clarification concerning the number of students who currently walk to the existing location. Plant stated the number varies from semester to

semester. There could be as many as 16 students; however, Plant feels most students drive. Plant indicated there could be as few as 6 students who walk. Burkman asked if the use of Finch Court will be temporary or if the University will make this the permanent site of the Confucius Institute. Plant explained that when a house becomes available for sale the University tries to purchase it. Currently there are only 3 pieces of real estate not owned by the University. It is reasonable to conclude that within the next 5 to 8 years the University will be able to acquire these 3 properties. Plant said the University's recently released Master Plan talks about the need to finalize plans for how the Eastgate will be used. It is reasonable to assume the Institute will come back to the east side of campus. Plant clarified that there are only 2 houses on Finch Court and both are owned by the University. Burkman pointed out that Finch Court is not in very good shape. Burkman stated no permits will be required from Engineering; therefore, there is nothing that will require the installation of sidewalks, but Burkman feels this should be considered. There is also a concern about students trying to cross Sturdy Road. Plant stated they are exploring the possibility with the Chinese government of renting homes on Dove Drive to students. This would clearly put them within walking distance to the Institute and avoid the need to cross Sturdy Road.

KENT: Kent indicated that when the house to the north is demolished the pad should remain for parking purposes. Plant indicated the University is getting pricing to re-do the cul-de-sac. Kent requested clarification on trash removal. Plant indicated that the night shift cleaning crew collects the trash and brings it to the campus for disposal. Kent understands the house on Warbler is also owned by the University. Kent also expressed concern regarding connection of a sidewalk to the property and mentioned this should be discussed further. Plant stated he will provide a count on pedestrian traffic.

EVANS: Evans had no additional comments concerning the asphalt or sidewalks; however, Evans shares the same concerns voiced by both Burkman and Kent.

PILARSKI: Pilarski said that since no changes are being made to the sanitary sewer service line from the building to the sewer main and strictly sanitary waste water will be discharged from the building, there are no comments from Water Reclamation.

GESKEY: Geskey indicated that backflow protection will be required and contacting Shaun Shifflett concerning this item is necessary.

JOHNSON: Johnson asked if a monitored alarm system exists in the building. Plant stated there is no monitored alarm system. Johnson had no further comments.

ISSUES TO BE RESOLVED:

- Fire Department Inspection
- Detailed Site Plan
- Backflow Prevention
- State Design Release (already received)
- Signage / Fencing Permit
- Zoning Clearance