

Minutes of the WPCNA Meeting:
Education House, 5 Homeside Lane

Date: 3-12-19

Guest Speaker:

Robert P. Weisz – President and CEO of RPW Group

Topic: Proposed residential development at 1133 Westchester Ave. (The Flats)

WPCNA Board Members attending:

Andrew Custodio	Co-President
Chirs Price	Co-President
Annemarie Encarnacao	Co-Vice President
Ruthmarie Hicks	Recording Secretary
Tom Osbeck	Treasurer

WPCNA Board Members not in attendance.

Ron Palmer	Co-Vice President
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Andrew Custodio called the meeting to order.

The issue of the official website being down was discussed briefly. Steps are being taken to have a new site up and running by the next meeting in April.

ROBERT WEISZ PRESENTATION:

1133 Westchester Ave. sits on roughly 74 acres and is located in a Campus Office (C-O) Zoning District. The lot is currently home to a large multi-tenant four-story office complex with multiple tenants.

We are seeking to approve an additional 303-unit multi-family residential complex. The new complex would contain three five-story buildings (The Flats).

One of the benefits is that the office complex already has a shuttle service that can be put to use for the residential complex. Since the traffic from the residence and office complexes are moving in opposite directions during peak hours, adding that service is both easy and practical. The movement of traffic in opposite directions at peak hours will also minimize the impact of the new development on traffic patterns.

The residential neighborhood behind 1133 Westchester Ave. will be buffered by the office complex which will stand between the new complex and the neighborhood. The elevation of the new complex lies 60 feet lower than the houses and is 600 feet away. There will be minor impact on a some homes abutting Woodbrook Rd. and McGuinness Ln.

A few additional points:

- Access to the property will be via Westchester Ave. only. As a result, additional traffic in nearby residential neighborhoods should be no issue. There is an emergency road for fire department access. This is for emergency use and is chained and will remain that way.
- We have spoken with all the neighbors behind the property. Paths will go through the neighborhood at 1133 Westchester Ave. But we will not connect those paths to any other existing residential neighborhoods in White Plains.
- The height of the new residential complexes will be the same as that of the office complex (so it will seem of one level from the perspective of the surrounding neighborhoods). This is because the new buildings will sit 10 ft lower than the existing office complex. The area under the new building site is being excavated to accommodate this.
- Most of the complex is being built on top of the existing parking lot. This reduces the need to cut down trees and also reduces the amount of impervious surfaces.
- There will be a total of 500 parking spaces, but 50% of the spaces already exist as part of the office complex. The total number of new parking spots will be 250.
- The roofs will be covered with solar paneling reducing the environmental impact.
- There will be lots of landscaping as well.
- Facilities that will be shared with the office complex include the shuttle service as well as the fitness center, day care center. There is also a beauty parlor on site.
- In addition, we will be adding a pet "spa" for grooming your pet.
- The residential complex will have doormen and additional security.
- This is a joint venture between RPW Group and NRP Group. NRP is a large group very familiar with building residential housing.

- The units will be luxury apartments. Pricing to begin in the \$2000/month range. 10% of the units will be affordable for those who meet the criteria.
- The breakdown of the units is as follows:
 - 170 -1BR,
 - 123 - 2BR
 - 10 - 3BR

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS:

Q. Milagros Lecuona - How will the natural gas moratorium impact the complex?

A. We have already applied for gas. We can already access gas - it doesn't have to be brought in. The moratorium is for 100% service. If you have interrupted service – such as an alternate fuel (oil boilers) then there is no moratorium. The issue around the moratorium is that they are worried about peak hours. So if you can switch to oil at peak times, the moratorium does not apply.

Q. What are the estimated property taxes?

A. Not yet known. Currently paying taxes for land. The addition of residential buildings will increase revenues to the city substantially.

Q. David Breakstone – (represents Fairways) I live on Eagle Court - people that abut the property are asking about how trespassing will be prevented

A: There are two gates. There is a picket fence with a gate and there is a fire gate. We will re-enforce the fencing so that people can't move from one side to the other. The fences the end of the properties and would extend up to the pond at the edge of the adjoining properties. You would have to cross the pond by swimming to get to the other side.

Q. Mark Lulu - Battle Hill - Are you marketing to current office tenants?

A. The response has been overwhelmingly strong. The office tenants like the idea of living/work space nearby. Some will rent corporate apartments as well.

Q. Anne Marie Encarnacao - There are not a lot of apartments available. What is the occupancy in the office complex?

A. It is about 90% full.

Q. Ellen Berger - What about light pollution?

A. They want to reduce the lighting by changing it. Low lighting is deflected to the ground. This lessens the impact from above. The buildings are also going to be blocked by the office building. So the impact upon the neighborhood would be minimal.

Q. Ellen Berger - Will people see the roofs of the apartments?

A. The residential buildings are 250 ft away from the office building and over 600 ft away from houses. It should not be an issue. Also, evergreens were suggested and have been agreed to for a year-round buffer.

Comment – Milagros Lecuona – This may be the first of many such buildings. So it would set a precedent. Solar panels, water conservation etc., set the standard for future developments. The same holds for using local union labor. Giving our local workers a chance to do work. It sets the standard for all the rest.

Q. Former fire department member: Fire Department Response time - Did anyone do a time study on response time at night?

A. (Milagros Lecuona) The answer is that these questions have been submitted to the city for department responses. That's still out.

Comment – Milagros Lecuona - This will make a change in the responsibilities of the fire station and ladder 34

Q. Brian McGrath (Green Ln) My house has view of western parking lot. Will rear parking lot have more activity with the new complex? Is there a possibility of more evergreen barriers on the western side?

A. Open to discussing the issue with the neighborhood.

Howard - You pointed out that you are attracting millennials. Can the walk and ride their bikes. They don't like to drive. Shuttles are free. provide bike racks. Mature couples. Young professionals.

Comment - Chris Price - Looking at the potential business angle, this complex can generate a good deal of revenue from complexes like this.

Why is White Plains attractive? The zoning is not available in most places for complexes such as this. Harrison (on the other side of Westchester Ave) has Wegman's which is very convenient for these residents. White Plains side had the wisdom of asking what do we need? With new zoning it can be done. You can build 300 apartments, while the residential area will still be shielded from new builds.

Comment - Milagros Lecuona – This time, the developer was involved with the neighborhoods and tried to do things the right way We don't see this very often with other developers.

Q: When will the complex be completed?

A: Looking at a 2021 move-in.

The meeting was adjourned. The next meeting is April 9, 2019.

ADDITIONAL LINKS:

Westchester Site Plan Submission Letter

(<https://www.cityofwhiteplains.com/DocumentCenter/View/4840/1133-Westchester-Site-Plan-Submission-Letter--Jan-23-19>)

More Than 300 New Apartments Proposed for 1133 Westchester Avenue

(<https://www.theexaminernews.com/more-than-300-new-apartments-proposed-for-1133-westchester-avenue/>)

White Plains First Live/Work Campus Development Under Review

(<https://www.theexaminernews.com/white-plains-first-live-work-campus-development-under-review/>)

RPW Group proposes 303 apartments at 1133 Westchester Ave. complex

(https://dailyvoiceplus.com/westchester/westchester-business-journal/real-estate/rpw-group-proposes-303-apartments-at-1133-westchester-ave-complex/750724/?utm_source=Westchester%20County%20Business%20Journal)