Wesleyan Student Assembly Resolution 8.34

Sponsors: Andrew Trexler ’14 (Principal), Syed Ali ’13, Jacob Blumenthal ’13, Gabriela De Golia ’13, Zach Malter ’13, Mansoor Alam ’15

Recognizing the significant and vocal outcry against the proposed development¹ and the proposed zoning text change² by residents of neighboring areas,

Recognizing the significant and vocal opposition to the proposed development by the Wesleyan Faculty,³ many members of which are also residents of the City of Middletown,

Recognizing the significant and vocal opposition to the proposed development amongst the College Body,⁴ manifested in numerous polls,⁵ discussions, meetings of the General Assembly of the Wesleyan Student Assembly (WSA), and a community forum with Centerplan developers and members of the Wesleyan community which occurred on 27th November 2012 (at which “of the 150 or more attendees, not one spoke up in favor of the development”⁶),

Concerned by the current lack of pedestrian safety on Washington Street and the possibility of increased traffic volume in the areas adjacent to campus due to new commercial development,

Concerned by potential damage to Middletown’s unique urban aesthetic currently enjoyed by students and residents posed by the proposed development due to potential demolition of historic buildings,

Noting the high likelihood that the proposed zoning text change may lead to further commercial development along Washington Street, thereby significantly altering the residential environment enjoyed by many Wesleyan students,

Concerned by the possibility of negative effects on Middletown businesses, cafés, and restaurants by the installation of national chains,

Concerned in particular by the potential affects that such a development and zone text change will have on Wesleyan students’ relationship to Middletown by inciting them to support national—as opposed to local—businesses, and by potentially deterring them from exploring the historic downtown neighborhood that is Middletown’s Main Street,

¹ “Proposed development” being hereafter defined as the development project proposed by Centerplan Company, LLC on the North side of Washington Street, between Pearl and High Streets.
² “Proposed zone change” being hereafter defined as the zone text change proposed by LLC Acquisitions on 8th January 2013 to allow for a special exception for mixed use development in MX zones, which would allow for retail, upper story professional office, restaurants and upper story residential.
³ A Sense of the Faculty Resolution, adopted at the Faculty Meeting of 4th December 2012
⁴ “College Body” is defined as “every student recognized by [Wesleyan] University as an enrolled, degree-seeking undergraduate.” WSA Constitution, II
⁵ Including and especially a survey sent to the whole College Body; 62 percent of respondents indicated “No” to the question “The Wesleyan Student Assembly is interested in your opinion about the proposed development on Washington Street area between Pearl and High Streets. Are you in favor of this development?”
Concerned by the likelihood that the proposed zone text change will open the door to future developments that will garner concerns similar to those mentioned above,

Acknowledging the role of the WSA as the “legislative and deliberative organization of the College Body,” responsible for “serving as a forum for … promotion of [Wesleyan] University policies consistent with student interests” and “transacting other business on behalf of the College Body,”

Commending Wesleyan University’s decision not to collaborate with Centerplan through the association of its bookstore, deciding instead to retain the bookstore’s current location on Broad Street,

Finding a mandate to present the opinion of the College Body on this issue to the Middletown Planning and Zoning Commission, upon whose cooperation the proponents of the proposed development and the proposed zone text change depend to proceed in full capacity,

Therefore be it resolved, the Wesleyan Student Assembly

1. Urges the Middletown Planning and Zoning Commission to deny any zone text change that would allow for MX zones along Washington Street to be used for retail, upper story professional office space, restaurants, or upper story residential purposes;
2. Resolves to remain actively seized of matters regarding the proposed development and zone text change.

*Introduced 3rd February 2013 / Adopted 10th February 2013, amended 24th February 2013*

*Presented at the Public Hearing of the Middletown Planning and Zoning Commission of 27th February 2013*

---

7 WSA Constitution, III.A
8 WSA Constitution, III.B.3
9 WSA Constitution, III.B.4