



January 28, 2006

## **Hyde Park Planners Debate Dunkin’ Donuts, St. Andrews Village**

**By Cara Patterson**

Several agenda items elicited intense discussion from the board and the public at the Hyde Park planning board meeting on Jan. 18. Members of the board shared their opinions on early plans for the St. Andrews Planned Unit Development. While they did not come to a resolution at the meeting, sharing comments and hearing from the public were steps toward a decision on the St. Andrews plan. Several members expressed enthusiasm about the project, but concerns raised included:

- Some feared for the safety of students from the Culinary Institute. Board members suggested an overpass to improve safety for pedestrians.
- More affordable housing was suggested for the project.
- Michael Dupree, a new member of the board, suggested that homes be clustered and shopping be decentralized to decrease the amount of driving that would be necessary.

Another major agenda item was the proposed drive-through Dunkin’ Donuts on Route 9G at the site of a former Citgo gas station. Under the proposal, the existing building would not be moved or substantially changed, but landscaping, separate entrance and exit lanes, an emergency exit onto Greenbush Drive and 10 parking spaces would be created.

There were numerous concerns raised by board members and citizens over traffic, particularly as board members compared the site to the other Dunkin’ Donuts in Hyde Park on Route 9. One member referred to the traffic conditions there as a “monstrosity that happens every single day.” Board members told the developer that they were trying to understand how “this (site) works and others don’t.”

A Greenbush Drive resident who admitted she would be one of the “first customers” also said that that traffic in the area was “horrific;” she worried that parking would spill onto Greenbush.

The developer sought to distinguish his site from other Dunkin’ Donuts in the area, arguing that traffic conditions on Route 9G were substantially less than those on Route 9. In addition, said the developer, markings on the drive-through and new management tools are intended to expedite the drive-through process, which is expected to take 90 seconds per car from order to pick-up.

A resolution on the Dunkin’ Donuts proposal was postponed until at least Feb. 15, when the board reconvenes. However, board members requested that the developer look more closely at the traffic during rush hours, while also performing an analysis of the time required to make a left turn out of the site.