

July 30, 2009

MEMORANDUM

TO: Prince George's County Planning Board

VIA: Steve Adams, Urban Design Supervisor

FROM: Elizabeth Whitmore, Senior Planner

SUBJECT: Detailed Site Plan, DSP-00013  
Bishop McNamara High School  
Alternative Compliance, AC-00047  
TCPII/94/00  
Departure from Design Standards, DDS-519

The Urban Design staff has reviewed the Detailed Site Plan for the Bishop McNamara High School. Based on that review and the findings in this report, the Development Review Division recommends Approval with conditions.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

This Detailed Site Plan was reviewed and evaluated for compliance with the following criteria:

1. Conformance with the Zoning Ordinance, Section 27-443, and *Landscape Manual* for a private school in the R-55 zone.
2. Conformance with the site design guidelines as outlined in Part 3, Division 9, Subdivision 3, of the Prince George's County Zoning Ordinance.
3. Referrals.

FINDINGS

Based on the evaluation and analysis of the subject application, the Urban Design staff recommends the following findings:

1. Detailed Site Plan DSP-00013 is for an addition to a private school, located on the north side of Marlboro Pike, east of MD 458.

The proposed addition is for a fine arts and athletic center to an existing private school. To the west of the subject site in the R-55 zone is an existing church and private school, Mt. Calvary. To the north, east and south there are numerous existing private residences and

three commercial uses. The subject addition to the school is located approximately 40 feet from the single-family residence to the north and 80 feet from Mt. Calvary Church and school to the west.

2. The site development data for DSP-00013 is as follows:

Bishop McNamara High School  
DSP-00013

Zone	R-55 Zone
Area	14.22 acres
Use	Private School
Proposed Use	Private School, Fine Arts and Athletic Center
Enrollment	724 children
Playground area required (minimum)	72,400 square feet
Playground area provided	138,300 square feet
Parking required	
Students up to Grade 10 (1 space per 6 students)	63 spaces
Students up to Grade 12 (1 space per 3 students)	117 spaces
Parking required (for all uses)	180 spaces
Parking provided (for all uses)	180 spaces
Loading required (for all uses)*	1 space
Loading provided (for all uses)	2 spaces

\*See Finding 3

3. A loading schedule must be provided. The loading space located east of the existing building must be shown at 15 feet wide by 25 feet in length to maintain its ■grand fathered■ status. The new loading space and access to the space located on the west side of the proposed building are in violation of Section 27-579(b) of the Zoning Ordinance which requires that: ■No portion of an exterior loading space, and no vehicular entrances to any loading space (including driveways and doorways), shall be located within fifty (50) feet of any Residential Zone (or land proposed to be used for residential purposes on an approved ...Detailed Site Plan).■ A departure (DDS-519, attached) of 22 to 38 feet is requested from the 50 foot setback requirement from adjoining residential property to the west and a departure of 5 to 30 feet is requested from the property to the north. The Departure request is discussed at the end of this staff report.
4. In general the subject application is in conformance with the requirements of the Landscape Manual except for Section 4.2 (Commercial and Industrial Landscape Strip) and Section 4.7 (Buffering Incompatible Uses). The applicant applied for Alternative Compliance (AC-00047, attachment ■A■) to seek relief from Section 4.7 of the *Landscape Manual*. The request for alternative compliance is recommended for approval by the Planning Director and is as follows:

**Section 4.7 (Buffering Incompatible Uses)**

**REQUIRED: (eastern property line)**

Length of bufferyard	485 feet
Landscaped yard	30 feet
Building setback	40 feet
Fence or wall	no
Plant materials (120PUs/100 LF)	582 plant units

**PROVIDED:**

Landscaped yard:	30 feet
Building setback:	Varies Between 370 - 400 linear feet
Plant materials	580 plant units

**JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDATION:**

Section 4.7, Buffering Incompatible Uses, requires a minimum 40-foot building setback and a 30-foot landscaped bufferyard when a private school is adjacent to single-family residences. The existing site conditions include an existing track and football field adjacent to the required bufferyard. The applicant is providing the required 30-foot landscaped yard except for a five-foot-wide, 117 foot-long area for bleachers. Due to this minimal intrusion the applicant should not be required to provide more plant units than are normally required.

The Alternative Compliance Committee recommends that Alternative Compliance from Section 4.7, Bufferyard Requirements, be **APPROVED** subject to the following conditions:

- Two (2) additional evergreen trees shall be added to Bufferyard Three bringing the total evergreen trees to 582.
- The label, Bufferyard 8, shall be replaced with, 4.3 Parking Lot Requirements, and the notes shall be modified accordingly

**RECOMMENDATION:**

The Planning Director recommends approval of alternative compliance pursuant to Section 4.7 of the Landscape Manual, along the north, east and south property lines. The Detailed Site Plan shall be revised in accordance of the Alternative Compliance recommendation prior to signature approval of the Detailed Site Plans.

The plans should be revised to be in accordance with Section 4.2, Commercial and Industrial Landscape Strip, of the Prince George's County *Landscape Manual*.

5. The Urban Design Section has reviewed the architecture and finds the proposed addition to be an attractive one-to two-story building. The proposed building materials are oversized brick (4" x 12"). Horizontal accent bands of brick are shown on all four sides of the elevations. The mechanical equipment located on the roof of the building has been screened

from view with what appears to be a standing seam metal screen. Two types of glass are being proposed for windows, spandrel and standard insulated glass. The architectural elevations should be revised to indicate the color of all proposed materials.

6. The Environmental Planning Section reviewed and approved TCPII/94/00 in conjunction with a grading permit application on September 28, 2000. The Detailed Site Plan and TCPII are consistent with the previously approved TCP. Therefore TCPII/94/00 as received by the Environmental Planning Section on October 30, 2000 is recommended for approval in conjunction with DSP-00013.
7. The 1985 *Master Plan for Suitland-District Heights and Vicinity* recognizes the quasi-public use, but provides no specific recommendations for the property.
8. The subject site has an approved Stormwater Management Plan, #008003190.
9. The Transportation Planning Section and State Highway Administration have found the plans acceptable as submitted. No master plan trails are recommended for the subject application.
10. The Permit Review Section had numerous comments; all have been addressed except for the following:
  - (a) The height of all fences should be provided on the plan.
  - (b) The lot coverage should be provided.
  - (c) The right-of-way and centerline should be provided on the site plan, and the required landscaping should be provided behind the right-of-way.

Concerns a and b above have been addressed in the Recommendation Section of this report; c has been addressed in Finding #4.

11. The Subdivision Section in a memorandum dated October 20, 2000 (Chellis to Whitmore) offered the following comment:
 

■The property is the subject of record plat WWW44@66, known as Mount Calvary Parish Property, approved in 1963. The subject site is 14.22 acres. The applicant must provide evidence that ten percent of the total area of the site, has been constructed pursuant to a building permit issued on or before December 31, 1991. This exemption, contained in Section 24-111(c)(4) of the Subdivision Regulation, can be addressed through the use of site notes. Indicate the year of construction of the existing structures, to include any additions, with the building permit number. The applicant must demonstrate that 61,975 square feet of gross floor area has been constructed in accordance with the regulation as outlined above.●

The applicant has provided a letter that has been reviewed by the Subdivision Section which addresses the above referenced concerns. The Subdivision Section has determined that subdivision of the subject site is not required. Notes should be placed on the site plan identifying the year of construction of existing buildings including additions with the

appropriate building permit number, if available.

12. The municipality of District Heights had not responded to the referral request at the time of writing of the staff report.
13. The plan will be in compliance with the Zoning Ordinance Section 27-443 and the *Landscape Manual* for a private school in the R-55 zone after the recommended revisions are made to the Detailed Site Plan.
14. The plan will, if revised in accordance with the proposed conditions of approval, represent a reasonable alternative for satisfying the site design guidelines without requiring unreasonable costs and without detracting substantially from the proposed development for its intended use.

## RECOMMENDATION

Based upon the foregoing analysis the Urban Design staff recommends that the Planning Board adopt the findings of the report and APPROVE DSP-00013 for Bishop McNamara High School, TCPH/94/00, and AC-00047 subject to the following conditions:

1. Prior to certificate approval, the following revisions and/or notes shall be made or added to the Detailed Site Plan:
  - a. A loading schedule shall be provided; the existing loading space shall be dimensioned at 15 feet wide and 25 feet in length.
  - b. Two (2) additional evergreen trees shall be added to Bufferyard Three bringing the total evergreen trees to 582.
  - c. The label, Bufferyard 8, shall be replaced with, 4.3 Parking Lot Requirements, and the notes shall be modified accordingly
  - d. The Landscape Plans shall be revised in accordance with Section 4.2, Commercial and Industrial Landscape Strip of the *Landscape Manual*.
  - e. The architectural elevations shall be revised to include the color of all proposed materials.
  - f. The height of all fences shall be provided.
  - f. Provide the right-of-way line and centerline of Marlboro Pike.
  - g. Notes shall be added to the site plan identifying the year of construction of existing buildings, including additions, with the appropriate building permit number, if available.

## Departure from Design Standards (DDS 519)

1. The site is located on the north side of Marlboro Pike, east of MD 458. The site is zoned R-55 and encompasses 14.22 acres. The proposal is for construction of a fine arts and athletic center which encompasses 23,174 gross square feet and a reduction in the required 50 foot setback requirement stating that no exterior loading space and no vehicular entrances to any loading space shall be located within 50 feet of any Residentially Zoned or land used for residential purposes. The applicant is providing the required amount of parking and loading spaces.

2. The request of the applicant in Departure from Design Standards DDS-519 is as follows:

Section 27-579(b) of the Zoning Ordinance requires that: ■No portion of an exterior loading space, and no vehicular entrances to any loading space (including driveways and doorways), shall be located within fifty (50) feet of any Residential Zone (or land proposed to be used for residential purposes on an approved ...Detailed site Plan).• A departure of from 22 to 38 feet is requested from the 50 foot setback requirement from adjoining residential property to the west and a departure of 5 to 30 feet is requested from the property to the north.

3. Required Findings

(a) **Section 27-239.01(b)(9) of the Zoning Ordinance provides that in order for the Planning Board to grant the departure, it shall make the following findings:**

1. **The purposes of this Subtitle will be equally well or better served by the applicant's proposal.**

The purposes of the Zoning Ordinance are set forth in Section 27-102. They are varied in nature, but in general, are to protect the health, safety and welfare of the residents and workers in Prince George's County. In this instance, the facts establish that granting the requested departure will in no way jeopardize these purposes. The subject property is located in an older area inside the Beltway that was developed before most current zoning and development standards came into effect. The current condition of the immediate area can be described as mostly residential in character. There is an adjoining church use and private school to the west of the subject property. The proposed application of the subject property will improve the environment and enhance the services provided by Bishop McNamara High School to the benefit of the residents who live in the area.

2. **The departure is the minimum necessary, given the specific circumstances of the request.**

The departure is the minimum necessary given the specific circumstances of the site. An existing high school and track and football field dominate a large portion of the subject site, thus leaving the proposed location of the youth center the only developable portion of the site, and leaving no other possible route for access to the loading except along the western edge of the site. The access drive is shifted as far from the western property line as possible.

3. **The departure is necessary in order to alleviate circumstances which are**

**unique to the site or prevalent in areas of the County developed prior to November 29, 1949.**

The departure is necessary to alleviate circumstances which are unique to the site. The subject application is part of an existing private school which predates the *Landscape Manual*. The specific use does not predate 1950, but the school and its location in an Inner Beltway Community on a limited parcel of land create a unique circumstance in trying to provide amenities to the immediate area.

**4. The departure will not impair the visual, functional or environmental quality or integrity of the site or of the surrounding neighborhood.**

The departure will not impair the visual, functional or environmental quality or integrity of the site or of the surrounding neighborhood.

The area to the north, behind the proposed loading space is improved with a six-foot-high board-on-board fence, a berm and landscape plantings. This screening will alleviate any negative impacts to the single-family residence located approximately 120 linear feet from the common property line and 175 linear feet from the loading space. Mt. Calvary Church and school are located to the west of the subject application; this non-residential use is not likely to suffer any significant negative effects from the location of the loading access drive. The application is providing landscaping along the access, thus creating a visual barrier to the loading space.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Based on the preceding analysis and findings, staff recommends that DDS-512 be APPROVED as submitted.