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# DETAILED SITE PLAN VARIANCE APPLICATION

**DSP-02003**  
**VD-02003**

Application	General Data
Project Name  INGLEWOOD, LOT 42, THE FOUNDATION SCHOOL  Location  SOUTHEAST OF THE INTERSECTION OF CARAWAY COURT AND McCORMICK DRIVE, SOUTHWEST OF THE INTERSECTION OF LOTTSFORD ROAD AND LANDOVER ROAD  Applicant/Address  THE FOUNDATION SCHOOL 6000 EXECUTIVE BLVD., SUITE 605 ROCKVILLE, MD 20852	Date Accepted 01/30/2002
	Planning Board Action Limit 04/11/2002
	ZHE Hearing Date N/A
	Plan Acreage 4.06
	Zone I-3
	Dwelling Units N/A
	Building Square Footage 58,050
	Planning Area 73
	Council District 06
	Municipality N/A
	200-Scale Base Map 202NE08

Purpose of Application	Notice Dates
FOR APPROVAL OF A PRIVATE SCHOOL WHICH REQUIRES AN 18.5-FOOT VARIANCE ON THE EAST AND A 26.5-FOOT VARIANCE ON THE SOUTHEAST FROM THE REQUIRED 38.5-FOOT SIDE YARD SETBACK, PER SECTION 27-474(B) TABLE 1-SETBACKS.	Adjoining Property Owners (CB-15-1998) 01/29/2002
	Previous Parties of Record (CB-13-1997) N/A
	Sign(s) Posted on Site 03/01/2002
	Variance(s): Adjoining Property Owners 03/12/2002

Staff Recommendation			Staff Reviewer: ZHANG
APPROVAL	APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS	DISAPPROVAL	DISCUSSION
	X		



July 30, 2009

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Prince George's County Planning Board

**VIA:** Steve Adams, Urban Design Supervisor

**FROM:** Henry Zhang, Urban Design Section, Development Review Division

**SUBJECT:** Detailed Site Plan, DSP-02003, The Foundation School  
Variance Application, VD-02003

The Urban Design staff has reviewed the Detailed Site Plan for the subject property and presents the following evaluation and findings leading to a recommendation of APPROVAL with conditions as described in the Recommendation section of this report.

**EVALUATION**

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

- a. The requirements of the Zoning Ordinance.
- b. The requirements of Concept Plan CSP-80034.
- c. The requirements of Preliminary Plan of Subdivision 4-82133.
- d. The requirements of the *Landscape Manual*.
- e. The requirements of the Prince George's County Woodland Conservation Ordinance.
- f. Referral comments.

**FINDINGS**

Based upon the evaluation and analysis of the subject Detailed Site Plan, the Urban Design Review staff recommends the following findings:

1. Request: The subject application is for approval of a Detailed Site Plan for a private school in the I-3 Zone.
2. Location: The site is located in Planning Area 73, Council District 6. It is situated specifically off Caraway Court and McCormick Drive, southwest of the intersection of Lottsford Road and Landover Road (MD 202).

3. Surroundings and Use: The subject site is bounded on the north by McCormick Drive and on the west by Caraway Court. Both McCormick Drive and Caraway Court have a right-of-way width of 70 feet. The adjacent property to the east is owned by HRD, Commercial Properties, Inc., and is currently vacant. A wetland is located on the HRD property abutting the subject site. The adjacent property to the southeast of the subject site is owned by Rouse Teachers Properties, Inc., and is improved with an office building. All the adjacent properties are zoned I-3.
4. Previous Approvals: The subject site is part of a previously approved Concept Plan, CSP-80034. The I-3 Zone requires the approval of a concept plan for the property that controls the characteristics of the development on the site. The Concept Plan was therefore submitted and approved on June 26, 1980. The subject site is also part of a previously approved Preliminary Plan of Subdivision, 4-82133, and is recorded in the final plat of subdivision, NLP 125@46. The stormwater management concept plan for the subject site was approved on November 26, 2001.

5. Site Plan Data: (As proposed by the applicant)

<b>Zone</b>	<b>I-3 (Planned Industrial/Employment Park)</b>
<b>Existing Use</b>	<b>Vacant</b>
<b>Proposed Use</b>	<b>Private School</b>
<b>Total Site Area</b>	<b>4.06 acres</b>
<b>Building Gross Floor Area</b>	<b>58,050 square feet</b>
<b>Building Coverage Required</b>	<b>45 percent maximum</b>
<b>Building Coverage Provided</b>	<b>33 percent</b>
<b>Green Area Coverage Required</b>	<b>25 percent minimum</b>
<b>Green Area Coverage Provided</b>	<b>47 percent</b>
<b>Building Height</b>	<b>37 feet</b>
<b>Total Proposed Enrollment</b>	<b>300 students</b>
Elementary School	60 students
Middle School	120 students
High School	120 students
<b>Total Play Area Required</b>	<b>30,000 square feet</b>
<b>Total Play Area Provided</b>	<b>30,056 square feet</b>
<b>Parking Required</b>	<b>70 spaces</b>
<b>Parking Provided</b>	<b>103 spaces</b>
of which Standard Spaces	51 spaces
Compact Spaces	47 spaces
HC Parking Spaces	5 spaces
<b>Loading Space Required</b>	<b>1 space</b>
<b>Loading Space Provided</b>	<b>1 space</b>

6. Design Features: The subject site has an irregular lot configuration with a long frontage along Caraway Court and a short frontage along McCormick Drive. The ground rises gently (approximately 4 percent) from north to south with a total grade difference of approximately 12-22 feet. Two curb cuts are proposed, one each on McCormick and Caraway Court. Buses

will enter from McCormick Drive and circulate through the rear parking area and exit onto Caraway Court.

One building in an L-shape configuration is proposed to front both the public rights-of-way, with the long leg of the L-shape along McCormick Drive and the short leg along Caraway Court. On-site parking and outdoor play areas are situated at the rear of the building. In order to have an undisturbed outdoor play area for the students, the on-site parking lots have been pushed outward and been located along the eastern and southeastern property lines.

The proposed L-shape building varies in height. A two-story classroom section forms one wing of the L-shape oriented toward McCormick Drive. A high volume gymnasium anchors the long wing of the L-shape along Caraway Court. A one-story administrative section with a slightly bowed facade fronting Caraway Court links the classrooms and the gymnasium.

The composition of the architectural elevations basically follows the spatial location of the functional sections and accents the horizontal expanse of the building. The elevation design is inward-focusing with various architectural treatments, such as translucent sandwich panels (Kalwall), a columned canopy and vertical metal wall panel, on the east and south elevations which are facing the proposed outdoor practice field/play area; fewer architectural treatments are proposed on the north and west elevations which are oriented toward McCormick Drive and Caraway Court, respectively. Long, horizontally-oriented segments consisting of Kalwall, face brick, vertical metal panel and aluminum window finishes dominate the two facades. A light and neutral color scheme consisting mainly of various shades of beige and grey dominates the proposed architectural elevations.

#### COMPLIANCE WITH EVALUATION CRITERIA:

7. Zoning Ordinance: The subject application has been reviewed for compliance with the requirements in the I-3 Zone and the site plan design guidelines of the Zoning Ordinance.
  - a. The subject application is in conformance with the requirements of Section 27-473(b), which governs permitted uses in industrial zones. The proposed private school is a permitted use. The school will offer a program of academic elementary, middle and high school education.
  - b. The site plan complies with specific requirements of Section 27-475.06.01, Private School. The proposed private school not only provides the required outdoor playground and activity areas but also proffers a gymnasium with a gross floor area of approximately 6,300 square feet.
  - c. The Detailed Site Plan is in compliance with the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance for development in the I-3 Zone, with the following exceptions for which the applicant has filed a variance application:

Setback from adjoining land in any nonresidential zone: Section 27-474(b) of the Zoning Ordinance, Setbacks for all yards in the I-3 Zone, requires a minimum 20-foot building and surface parking setback from adjoining land

in any nonresidential zone. For every one foot of building height, there is an additional one foot setback required. But the Ordinance allows 50 percent of this additional required yard to be used for surface parking as specified under Endnote 3 of this section. The proposed school building is 37 feet in height. The required setback in total for this property from the adjoining land is 38.5 feet.

The subject property is bounded on north and west by public rights-of-way and on the south and east by the adjoining properties. The private school building complies with the required setback. But the on-site parking spaces encroach into the required setback. The site plan provides a 12-foot setback from the eastern property line. A variance of 26.5 feet from the required setback is requested. The site plan also provides a 20-foot-setback from the adjoining southeastern property line. A variance of 18.5 feet from the required setback is requested.

- d. Per Section 27-230 of the *Zoning Ordinance*, a variance may only be granted when the Planning Board finds that:

- (1) **A specific parcel of land has exceptional narrowness, shallowness, or shape, exceptional topographic conditions, or other extraordinary situations or conditions;•**

Comment: The subject lot is one of the corner lots in the subdivision. The entire parcel in general has an irregular configuration and is somewhat narrow. According to the applicant, efforts were made to do a lot line adjustment, but those efforts were unsuccessful. The narrowness prevents the layout of the on-site parking lot from meeting the technical criteria of the Zoning Ordinance. Meanwhile, the portion of the adjacent property that is immediately abutting the subject property is a wetland, which is generally considered undevelopable. The existing wetland to the east serves as a natural buffer to minimize the possible impact of the proposed variance application on the adjacent property.

The proposed Foundation School is different from ordinary schools because the prospective students attending this school will be ■at-risk• children. The students in the proposed school require a higher degree of care and monitoring compared with regular students, which results in a high staff-student ratio. The proposed staff-student ratio is 1:3. With the proposed enrollment of 300 students, there will be approximately 100 staff members. The required parking would therefore be at least 100 spaces. A total of 103 parking spaces have been proposed. The parking computation in the Zoning Ordinance is based on the number of students instead of the number of faculty members. If calculated by the method prescribed in the Zoning Ordinance, only 70 parking spaces are needed. The special operational requirements of the proposed Foundation School create an extraordinary need for a larger-than-normal parking compound.

The setback requirements in the I-3 Zone are unique compared with those in other zones. The requirements not only prescribe a minimum setback, but also require an additional one-foot setback for every foot of building height in order to create a campus-like employment park. The proposed building complies with the requirements by setting back varying from

30 to 95 feet from the property lines. In order to accommodate the larger-than-normal parking requirement, the on-site parking spaces have to encroach into the required setback and lead this application into a special situation.

The portion of the adjacent property immediately abutting the subject property is a wetland, which is generally considered undevelopable. The existing wetland to the east serves as a natural buffer to minimize the adverse impact of the proposed variance application.

**■(2) The strict application of this Subtitle will result in peculiar and unusual practical difficulties to, or exceptional or undue hardship upon, the owner of the property; and•**

Comment: The special students of the proposed Foundation School require the outdoor play area/open space to be located as closely adjacent to the building as possible to provide a safe play environment. The strict application of this Subtitle will result in not only the loss of many of the needed parking spaces, but also the reduction of the usable and safe outdoor play area which is currently the allowable minimum size per Section 27-475.06.01(a)(1)(A). There would be no space for buffer between the parking and the play areas either. The safety of the children playing on the outdoor playground would be reduced.

The denial of the variance application would make it impossible for the Foundation School to achieve its project goal and therefore would generate peculiar and unusual practical difficulties, such as not enough on-site parking or outdoor play area. Exceptional or undue hardship, such as significant reductions in enrollment, or elimination of some crucial operations could result from disapproval of the requested variance. The school's unmet parking need could spill over into the adjacent streets and have an adverse impact on the community.

**■(3) The variance will not substantially impair the intent, purpose, or integrity of the General Plan or Master Plan.•**

Comment: The subject property is in Planning Area 73/Northampton Community-Employment Area 1. The site is also in the Developing Tier of the 2000 Interim General Plan. According to the Largo-Lottsford Master Plan (1989), the subject site is within the Urban Center's employment areas, which are proposed primarily for office and research and development space. Geographically, the site is inside the employment area, off McCormick Drive, which is an existing collector, and Caraway Court, which is a cul-de-sac not classified in the Master Plan. The site is in the middle of the I-3-zoned properties and is not visually prominent from major traffic arteries in the vicinity of the employment areas. Meanwhile, the proposed Foundation School is employment-intensive compared with other schools. With a staff-to-student ratio of 1:3, the Foundation School will provide approximately 100 positions upon its completion. Granting the variance for this petition will not substantially impair the intent, purpose, or integrity of the *General Plan* or Master Plan.

8. Concept Plan CSP-80034: A Concept Plan was mandated for the larger property which includes the subject site because the property is located in the I-3 Zone. The Prince George's County Planning Board approved the Concept Plan, CSP-80043, on June 26, 1980, subject

to five conditions. None of the conditions is applicable to the subject Detailed Site Plan and variance application. The proposed Detailed Site Plan is in conformance with CSP-80034.

9. Preliminary Plan of Subdivision, 4-82133: The subject property is Lot 42 in Section IV of the Inglewood Business Community. A preliminary plan of subdivision was approved for Section IV on December 15, 1982, subject to conditions regarding conformance with the concept plan, stormwater management and 100-year flood plain management. None of the conditions is specifically applicable to the subject Detailed Site Plan and variance application.
10. Landscape Manual: The proposed private school is a medium impact use and is subject to the requirements of Section 4.3, Parking Lot Requirements, and Section 4.7, Buffering Incompatible Uses, of the *Landscape Manual*. The proposed private school is bounded on the north and west by public rights-of-way. But the development is in the I-3 Zone, so it is exempt from Section 4.2, Commercial and Industrial Landscaped Strip Requirements.
  - a. The proposed development has approximately 35,042 square feet of parking lot, which is above the prescribed 7,000 square feet criterion of the *Landscape Manual*. Per Section 4.3 c, Interior Planting, five percent of the total parking area must be interior planting area to be planted with 1 shade tree for each 300 square feet. The Landscape Plan satisfies the interior planting requirement and provides two more shade trees than are required.
  - b. The proposed development is a medium impact use as defined by the *Landscape Manual*. The property adjacent to the site to its east is vacant and zoned I-3. According to Section 4.7, in all commercial and industrial zones, if the developing use is high or medium impact, the abutting vacant property will be deemed to be the same impact category as the developing use. There is no bufferyard required between the proposed private school and the adjacent vacant land. The applicant provides a 12-foot-wide landscaped strip with 155 plant units.

The property adjacent to the site to its southeast is used as office. The office use is defined as a medium impact use by the *Landscape Manual*, which is in the same impact category as the proposed development. Therefore, there is no bufferyard required between the subject site and the adjacent office property. But the applicant provides a 20-foot-wide landscaped strip with 240 plant units. The proposed Detailed Site Plan and variance application well serve the intent of the *Landscape Manual*.
11. Woodland Conservation Ordinance: The property is not subject to the provisions of the Prince George's County Woodland Conservation Ordinance because there is less than 10,000 square feet of existing woodland on the subject property. The area of existing woodland on the property is approximately 1,500 square feet.

A simplified Forest Stand Delineation (FSD) was submitted with this application and found by the Environmental Planning staff to address the requirements for an FSD in accordance with the Prince George's County Woodland Conservation and Tree Preservation Technical Manual.



12. Referral Comments: The subject application was referred to all concerned agencies and divisions. Major referral comments are summarized as follows:
- a. The Community Planning Division, in a memorandum dated March 7, 2002, made the following determinations:

**■The *Largo-Lottsford Master Plan* places a very strong emphasis on high quality development in terms of design, architecture, aesthetics and overall quality in the Urban Center of this planning area. The proposed school building and other site improvements (fences, screening) should be compatible with the master plan's recommendations for high quality development.**

**■Approval of the variance to permit additional parking spaces in the building setback areas is not warranted. With a denial of the variance, there is concern that there will not be adequate on-site parking (based on the applicant's understanding of the parking need for their use).•**

Staff Comment: The architect of the building has been attentive to the design guidelines for Inglewood Business Park, characteristics of the surrounding structures, and the existing landscape environment. In addition to use of brick, architectural concrete masonry units and glass, which are the established building materials in the area, the designer has applied some other products such as metal siding, translucent panels (Kalwall) and aluminum windows finishes and architectural treatments such as bracketed curved roof, bowed facade, interesting fenestration pattern and columned canopy in order to deliver a visually unique building image.

The uniqueness of the proposed school in terms of its attendees requiring more care and monitoring from the school management results in a very high staff to student ratio of 1:3. This operational requirement leads to demand for more-than-normal parking spaces. A variance is requested in order to accommodate the needed parking spaces without losing the required outdoor play areas. Denial of the variance application could result in unmet parking demand that could have an adverse impact on the community.

- b. The Transportation Planning Section in a memorandum dated February 27, 2002, offered the following conclusion:

**■Based on the above analyses, the Transportation Planning section concludes that the proposed use and requested setback variance will not substantially impair the integrity of any existing or planned transportation facilities in the vicinity of the subject site, as required by Section 27-285 of the Prince George's County Code.•**

In a separate memorandum from the Transportation Planning Section dated February 27, 2002. on Detailed Site Plan Review for Master Plan Trail Compliance,

the Trails Planner noted that there are no master plan trails issues with this Detailed Site Plan and variance application.

- c. The Permit Section, in a memorandum dated February 25, 2002, asked several questions concerning compliance of the subject Detailed Site Plan and variance application with the requirements of the design guidelines and regulations of the Zoning Ordinance. These questions have been either addressed in the review process or worded as conditions in the Recommendation section of this report.
- d. In a memorandum dated February 27, 2002, the Subdivision Section staff revealed no significant subdivision issues with this Detailed Site Plan and variance application.
- e. This Detailed Site Plan and variance application were also referred to the WSSC. In a memorandum dated January 31, 2002, the staff noted that the project will be sufficiently served by the water and sewer system.
- f. In a memorandum dated February 12, 2002, the Environmental Planning Section found no significant environmental impacts associated with the proposed development of the subject property in accordance with both the Detailed Site Plan, DSP-02003, and the variance application, VD-02003. The staff further noted that:

**■ The variance request, if granted, would have no adverse impacts to environmental features regulated by the Subdivision Ordinance, Grading Ordinance, or Zoning Ordinance.●**

- g. In a memorandum dated February 27, 2002, the Department of Environmental Resources had no objection to approval of the Detailed Site Plan and variance application. The staff finds that:

**■ The site plan for Inglewood lot 42, the Foundation School, DSP-02003 is consistent with approved storm water concept #32949-2001.●**

- h. The application was also referred to the Department of Public Works and Transportation of Prince George's County. In a memorandum dated February 25, 2002, the staff offered the following comments:

**■ The subject property is located at the southeast corner of Caraway Court and McCormick Drive. Right-of-way dedication and frontage improvements along McCormick Drive is required in accordance with DPW&T's Specifications and Standard and per Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission's (M-NCPPC) latest approved Master Plan.**

**■ All improvements within the public right-of-way, as dedicated to the County, are to be in accordance with the County Road Ordinance, DPW&T's Specifications and Standards and the Americans with Disabilities Act.**

■The commercial driveway entrance shall be in accordance with DPW&T's General Specifications and Standard.

■Sidewalks are required along all roadways, existing and proposed, within the property limits.

■All storm drainage systems and storm drainage facilities are to be in accordance with DPW&T's and the Department of Environmental Resources' requirements.

■Conformance with street tree and street lighting standards is required.

■Existing utilities may require relocation and/or adjustments. Coordination with the various utility companies is required.

■A review of the Traffic Impact Study to determine the adequacy of access point(s) and the need for acceleration/deceleration and turn lanes is required.

■A soil investigation report, which includes subsurface exploration and a geo-technical engineering evaluation for public streets, is required.●

- i. The Board of Education and the Municipality of Landover Hills had not responded to the referral request at the time the staff report was written.

- 13. The Detailed Site Plan, if revised in accordance with the proposed conditions, will represent a reasonable alternative for satisfying the site design guidelines without requiring unreasonable costs and without detracting substantially from the utility of the proposed development from its intended uses.

## RECOMMENDATION

Based upon the foregoing evaluation and analysis, the Urban Design staff recommends that the Planning Board adopt the findings of this report and APPROVE Detailed Site Plan, DSP-02003, the Foundation School, and variance application VD-02003, subject to the following conditions:

- 1. Prior to certificate approval of Detailed Site Plan DSP-02003 and variance application VD-02003, the applicant shall:
  - a. Provide a detailed layout of the proposed play area adjacent to the classroom section of the building (including but not limited to its relationship with the classrooms, shade provided, etc.) and the five-foot-high screen wall details for review by the designee of the Planning Board.
  - b. Make the following revisions to the Detailed Site Plan and Landscape Plan:

- (1) The enclosure of the proposed hard surface play area to the south of the gymnasium shall be separated from other decorative and general purpose fences. An independent fence shall be provided to completely enclose the hard surface play area.
- (2) The ultimate right-of-way of both McCormick Drive and Caraway Court shall be indicated graphically on the site plan.
- (3) The method of identifying the compact parking spaces in the field shall be provided on the site plan.
- (4) Because the proposed landscaped strip between the practice field and the parking lot is too narrow for the proposed five Bloodgood Planetrees (*Platanus x Acerifolia* ♣*Bloodgood*♣), a minor species of shade tree shall be planted in that location.