



The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Prince George's County Planning Department
Development Review Division
301-952-3530

Note: Staff reports can be accessed at <http://mncppc.igmp2.com/Citizens/Default.aspx>

Special Exception

SE-4836

The Children's Guild Preschool

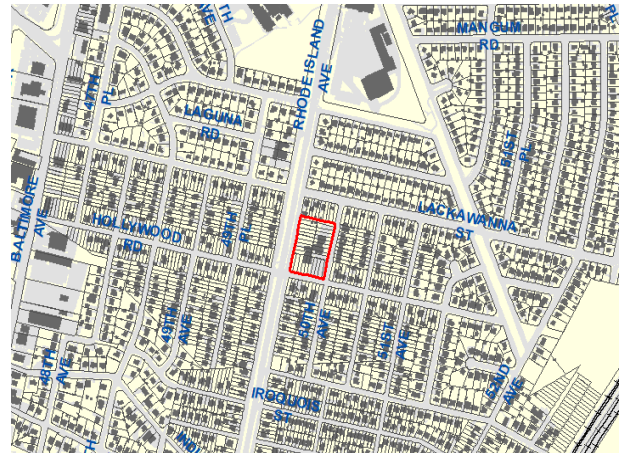
REQUEST	STAFF RECOMMENDATION
A special exception to accommodate a 120-student private school for preschool-aged students within an existing church and associated playground improvement.	APPROVAL with conditions

Location: In the northeast quadrant of the intersection of Rhode Island Avenue and Hollywood Road.

Gross Acreage:	2.15
Zone:	R-55
Dwelling Units:	0
Gross Floor Area:	22,060 sq. ft.
Lots:	30
Parcels:	0
Planning Area:	66
Council District:	01
Election District:	21
Municipality:	College Park
200-Scale Base Map:	212NE05

Applicant/Address:
The Children's Guild Inc.
6802 McClean Boulevard
Parkville, MD 21234

Staff Reviewer: Thomas Sievers
Phone Number: 301-952-3994
Email: Thomas.Sievers@ppd.mncppc.org



Planning Board Date:	03/04/2021
Planning Board Action Limit:	N/A
Staff Report Date:	02/16/2021
Date Accepted:	12/10/2020
Informational Mailing:	08/07/2020
Acceptance Mailing:	12/03/2020
Sign Posting Deadline:	N/A

The Planning Board encourages all interested persons to request to become a person of record for this application. Requests to become a person of record may be made online at

http://www.mncppcapps.org/planning/Person_of_Record/.

Please call 301-952-3530 for additional information.

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

TECHNICAL STAFF REPORT:

TO: The Prince George's County Planning Board
The Prince George's County District Council

VIA: Jeremy Hurlbutt, Supervisor, Zoning Review Section, Development Review Division

FROM: Thomas Sievers, Senior Planner, Zoning Review Section,
Development Review Division

SUBJECT: Special Exception SE-4836
The Children's Guild Preschool

REQUEST: A Special Exception to accommodate a 120-student private school for
preschool-aged students within an existing church and associated playground
improvement.

RECOMMENDATION: **APPROVAL with conditions**

NOTE:

The Planning Board has scheduled this application on the consent agenda for transmittal to the Zoning Hearing Examiner on the agenda date of March 4, 2021.

You are encouraged to become a person of record in this application. The request must be made in writing and addressed to the Prince George's County Office of the Zoning Hearing Examiner, County Administration Building, Room 2184, 14741 Governor Oden Bowie Drive, Upper Marlboro, MD 20772. Questions about becoming a person of record should be directed to the Hearing Examiner at 301-952-3644. All other questions should be directed to the Development Review Division at 301-952-3530.

FINDINGS:

1. **Location and Site Description:** The subject property is located in the northeast quadrant of Rhode Island Avenue and Hollywood Road. Two buildings exist on the property, which house existing church and day care uses in the One-Family Detached Residential (R-55) Zone. The existing buildings on-site total 22,060 square feet of gross floor area.
2. **History and Previous Approvals:** The subject property is located on Tax Map 25 in Grid F2, consists of 30 lots, and contains a total of 2.15 acres of land. The subject property is known as Lots 11 through 40, recorded by plat among the Prince George's County Land Records in Plat Book RNR 2, Pg. 18-19. The existing church, totaling two buildings, was originally constructed circa 1950. On May 15, 1964, the Prince George's County District Council approved a Special Exception (SE-1028) with no conditions to accommodate a portion of the property for the purpose of a day care use for children with the existing church use. The day care use will cease when the pending SE-4836 is approved for the use of the property as a church and private school.
3. **Neighborhood and Surrounding Uses:** The general neighborhood is bounded to the north by I-95/I-495 (the Capital Beltway), Baltimore Avenue to the west, the Greenbelt Metro Station to the east, and MD-193 (Greenbelt Road/University Boulevard East) to the south. The neighborhood primarily includes residential uses. The immediate uses surrounding the subject property are as follows:
 - North—** Single-family detached dwelling units and College Park Church of Nazarene in the R-55 Zone.
 - East—** Single-family detached dwelling units in the R-55 Zone.
 - South—** Single-family detached dwelling units in the R-55 Zone.
 - West—** Single-family detached dwelling units in the R-55 Zone.
4. **Request:** The applicant requests approval of a special exception to accommodate a 120-student private school for preschool-aged children within an existing church and associated playground improvement.

5. **Development Data Summary:**

	EXISTING	PROPOSED
Zone(s)	R-55	R-55
Use(s)	Church & Day Care	Church & Private School
Acreage	2.15	2.15
Lots	30	30
Gross Floor Area	22,060 sq. ft.	22,060 sq. ft.
Dwellings	0	0

6. **Required Findings:** A special exception is subject to the general findings for approval of all special exceptions contained in Section 27-317(a) of the Prince George's County Zoning Ordinance. Part 4 of the Zoning Ordinance also includes additional required findings for

specific uses. A private school is subject to the additional findings of Section 27-396 of the Zoning Ordinance. The analysis of all the required findings for approval are provided below.

In support of the application, the applicant filed a statement of justification submitted December 10, 2020 incorporated by reference herein. This case was heard at the Subdivision and Development Review Committee (SDRC) meeting on December 28, 2020. The applicant submitted a revised site plan and landscape plans for the subject property, which were received on January 28, 2021, as requested by staff at the SDRC meeting.

General Special Exception Findings—Section 27-317(a) provides the following:

(a) A Special Exception may be approved if:

- (1) The proposed use and site plan are in harmony with the purposes of this Subtitle.**
- (2) The proposed use is in conformance with all the applicable requirements and regulations of this Subtitle.**

The purposes of Subtitle 27 of the Prince George's County Code, as set forth in Section 27-102(a)(1-15) of the Zoning Ordinance, are generally to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public; to promote compatible relationships between various land uses; to guide orderly development; and to ensure adequate public facilities and services. Specific to the R-55 Zone, as set forth in Section 27-430(a) of the Zoning Ordinance, the purposes encourage variations in size, shape, and width of residential lots; higher density residential developments of various sizes and styles; preservation of open spaces; and prevention of soil erosion. The requested special exception complies with these general purposes by demonstrating conformance with the specific private school requirements set forth in Section 27-396, is in keeping with the residential character of the area with no additional development proposed and complies with the zoning regulations as set forth herein. By providing a private school for preschool-aged children within the residential community, the proposal seeks to accommodate the needs of the residential community while also preserving open space and existing development by collocating uses with existing uses, in this case a private school for preschool-aged children with a church.

- (3) The proposed use will not substantially impair the integrity of any validly approved Master Plan or Functional Master Plan, or in the absence of a Master Plan or Functional Map Plan, the General Plan.**

SE-4836 conforms to this finding. The proposed use of the property as a private school for preschool-aged children will not substantially impair the integrity of the 2001 *Approved Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment for the Greenbelt Metro Area*. The proposed use, in conjunction with the existing use as a church, does not impair the sector plan's land use plan, which identifies the property as medium-suburban density. The sector plan recommends retention of the residential character and uses in the North College Park area and recommends compatible residential infill

development. Since the proposed use builds upon the community character and fabric of the existing North College Park Area, it seeks to enhance the objectives of this neighborhood, as outlined in the sector plan, by enhancing the community by offering a desired and needed use and by indirectly maintaining the suburban density and character of this community.

(4) The proposed use will not adversely affect the health, safety or welfare of residents or workers in the area.

The private school within a church supports the health, safety, or welfare of County residents or workers in the area. SE-4836 provides both a safe environment for children to play and a safe internal circulation for vehicles and pedestrians. Sufficient security surrounding the outdoor play area (in the form of fencing) will be provided to ensure the children are protected and secure, and adequate shade will be provided.

The school will open for before care at 7:30 a.m., begin classes at 8:30 a.m., end classes at 4:00 p.m., and offer after care until 6:00 p.m. The students will be dropped off and picked up from the Rhode Island Avenue Service Road. Parents will proceed north on the service road and drop students off on the passenger side, where staff will meet the child. Students will enter the building through the entrance facing Rhode Island Avenue. Parents will proceed north on the service road and turn left or right at Muskogee Street.

If a parent wishes to enter the school, they will enter the parking lot from 50th Avenue. Arrival after 8:30 a.m. or dismissal before 4:00 p.m. will be at the parking lot on 50th Avenue. However, normal drop off in the morning and pickup at dismissal will be off of the Rhode Island Service Road. Based on the foregoing operational requirements, a Traffic Impact Analysis has been conducted in response to Staff comments, and the analysis confirms that no adverse impacts upon the health, safety, or welfare of residents or workers in the adjacent neighborhood will be realized.

(5) The proposed use will not be detrimental to the use or development of adjacent properties or the general neighborhood.

SE-4836 is to develop a private school within the existing church. As provided on the site plan filed in conjunction with this application, the proposed use will not be detrimental to the development of the adjacent properties, but will enhance the existing uses by supplementing them with this needed service in the community. By making this use a permitted use in the R-55 Zone, subject to the approval of a special exception, a determination has already been made that the use is compatible with the neighborhood, and no adverse impacts associated with the proposed use will exceed those inherent to said use. By utilizing the use within the existing church and by not proposing any increase to the gross floor area of the church, the use will have less impact on the general neighborhood than a new freestanding day care. Again, the use is intended to support the general neighborhood by providing a service that capitalizes on the established residential community it is within. Finally, the applicable buffer landscape

strips required by the 2010 *Prince George's County Landscape Manual* (Landscape Manual) will be provided. Furthermore, the Traffic Impact Analysis confirms that no impacts to the adjacent neighborhood are expected.

- (6) The proposed site plan is in conformance with an approved Tree Conservation Plan.**
- (7) The proposed site plan demonstrates the preservation and/or restoration of the regulated environmental features in a natural state to the fullest extent possible in accordance with the requirement of Subtitle 24-130(b)(5).**

A Natural Resources Inventory Equivalency Letter and Woodland Conservation Letter of Exemption were filed for the property, due to the fact that no regulated environmental features are located on the property and no on-site regulated environmental features will be impacted, since the property contains less than 10,000 square feet of woodland. These findings have been met.

Specific Special Exception Requirements:

Section 27-396 – Private School.

- (b) A private school which offers a partial or complete program of elementary school (including kindergarten) or nursery school may be permitted, subject to the following:**

- (1) The Council may specify the maximum number of children to be enrolled, which may not be increased by State or local health, education, or fire regulations;**

SE-4836 proposes a private school for up to 120 students.

- (2) An outdoor play area shall be provided, which shall have a usable space of at least one hundred (100) square feet per child. This area shall be located at least twenty-five (25) feet from any dwelling on an adjoining lot, and shall be enclosed by a substantial wall or fence at least three (3) feet high;**

SE-4836 proposes an outdoor play area of 13,947 square feet. The outdoor play area is at least 25 feet from any dwelling on any adjoining lot and will be enclosed by a 6-foot-high fence.

- (3) No private school, other than a nursery school, shall be located in any multifamily dwelling or in any building of a multifamily project;**

There are no multifamily dwellings located on the property. The private school will be located within a church building.

- (4) **In the C-W, C-M, I-1, I-2, and I-4 Zones, a day care center for children shall be allowed only if the council finds that existing development and uses in the neighborhood (particularly on adjacent properties) will not adversely affect the proposed use.**

This finding is not applicable, as the property is located in the R-55 Zone.

7. **Parking Regulations:** In accordance with the parking and loading regulations contained in Section 27-568(a)(3) of the Zoning Ordinance, the existing church (50 seats) is required to provide 13 spaces and the proposed private school (up to 120 students) is required to provide 20 parking spaces, for a total of 33 parking spaces. The submitted site plan shows that a total of 35 parking spaces will be provided, including 33 regular parking spaces and 2 standard handicap-accessible spaces. Section 27-582(a) of the Zoning Ordinance does not require loading spaces for churches or private schools. Required parking will be accommodated in an existing concrete parking lot with access to 50th Avenue.

8. **2010 Prince George's County Landscape Manual Requirements:** Since the proposed development neither increases the gross floor area of the existing building, nor increases the intensity of the existing church use, this development is exempt from the requirements of Sections 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8, 4.9, and 4.10, in accordance with Section 1.1(d) of the Landscape Manual. However, this development includes a large outdoor play area that is located closer than the existing church building to the existing adjacent single-family detached residences to the north of the site. The applicant has provided a bufferyard, in accordance with the design standards of Section 4.7, that will minimize any possible negative impacts of the playground on the existing houses abutting the property to the north.

The special exception site plan shows a proposed dumpster along 50th Avenue frontage. The dumpster is required to be screened from view along 50th Avenue, in accordance with the requirements of Section 4.4 of the Landscape Manual. The applicant should provide screening details on the plan before the approval of this special exception.

9. **Tree Canopy Coverage:** Subtitle 25, Division 3, the Tree Canopy Coverage Ordinance, requires a minimum percentage of tree canopy coverage (TCC) on projects that require a grading permit. Properties zoned R-55 are required to provide a minimum of 15 percent of the gross tract area in TCC. The subject site is 2.15 acres in size and will be required to provide a minimum of 14,048 square feet of the site in TCC. The TCC schedule shows conformance with the requirements.
10. **Prince George's County Woodland and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Ordinance (WCO):** The site is exempt from the provisions of the Woodland and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Ordinance (WCO) because the property contains less than 10,000 square feet of woodland and has no previous tree conservation plan approvals. A Standard Letter of Exemption from the WCO was issued for this site (S-157-2020), which expires on October 7, 2022.
11. **Signage:** No changes to the existing signage and no new signage are proposed with this application; therefore, this application does not require review of the sign regulations.

12. Referral Comments: The following referrals were received and are incorporated herein by reference; all of the comments are addressed on the site plan, or as part of this technical staff report:

- a. Community Planning Division, dated December 21, 2020 (Punase to Sievers)
- b. Transportation Planning Section, dated January 29, 2021 (Ryan to Sievers, Trails; Masog to Sievers, Traffic)
- c. Environmental Planning Section, dated January 29, 2021 (Juba to Sievers)
- d. Historic Preservation Section, dated December 23, 2020 (Stabler to Sievers)
- e. Urban Design Section, dated February 4, 2021 (Butler to Sievers)
- f. Department of Permitting, Inspections and Enforcement, dated January 25, 2021 (Giles to Sievers)

RECOMMENDATION

A special exception use is considered compatible with uses permitted by-right within the One-Family Detached Residential (R-55) Zone if specific special exception criteria are met. Unless unique adverse impacts are identified, the special exception may be approved. The appropriate standard for determining whether the use would create an adverse impact upon surrounding properties is to show that the proposed use, at this particular location proposed, would not have adverse impacts above and beyond those inherently associated with the special exception use, regardless of its location within the R-55 Zone.

Based on the applicant's statement of justification, the analysis contained in the technical staff report, associated referrals, and materials in the record, the applicant has demonstrated conformance with the required special exception findings, as set forth in Section 27-317 (in general) and Section 27-396, for private schools, of the Prince George's County Zoning Ordinance in this instance. Therefore, staff recommends approval of Special Exception SE-4836, Children's Guild, subject to the following conditions of approval:

- 1. The applicant, and the applicant's heirs, successors, and/or assignees shall provide the following facilities, prior to any building permit, and depict the following facilities on the site plan, prior to its certification:
 - a. Provide a crosswalk extending from the existing crosswalk crossing of Rhode Island Avenue, directly north of its intersection with Hollywood Road, to connect with the proposed sidewalk facility along the subject property's frontage of Rhode Island Avenue, unless modified by the City of College Park, with written correspondence.
 - b. Provide a sidewalk along the subject site's full frontage of Rhode Island Avenue, unless modified by the City of College Park, with written correspondence.

- c. Provide a sidewalk along the subject site's full frontage of 50th Avenue, unless modified by the City of College Park, with written correspondence.
 - d. Provide a sidewalk along the subject site's full frontage of Hollywood Road, unless modified by the City of College Park, with written correspondence.
 - e. Update the site plan to display a crosswalk crossing the drive aisle along 50th Avenue at the location where vehicles enter the site.
 - f. Provide R4-11 bikeway signage along the subject site's frontage of Hollywood Road, unless modified by the City of College Park, with written correspondence.
2. Prior to certification of the special exception, revisions shall be made to the site and landscape plan to provide screening details of the dumpster to demonstrate conformance with Section 4.4 of the 2010 *Prince George's County Landscape Manual*.