



CITY OF FORT PIERCE

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

REBECCA GROHALL, AICP, PLANNING MANAGER
COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING ♦ DEVELOPMENT REVIEW
HISTORIC PRESERVATION ♦ URBAN DESIGN ♦ URBAN FORESTRY ♦ ZONING

TO: Members of the City of Fort Pierce Planning Board

THROUGH: Rebecca Grohall, AICP, Planning Manager

FROM: Kori Benton, Senior Planner

SUBJECT: Application for Site Plan and Conditional Use
St. Andrew's Episcopal Academy Expansion
320 South Indian River Drive

DATE: July 6, 2015

STAFF REPORT

Owner(s): St Andrews Episcopal Church St. Andrews Episcopal Academy
210 S Indian River Dr 210 S Indian River Dr
Fort Pierce FL 34950-4337 Fort Pierce FL 34950-4337

Applicant: Trina Angelone, Head of School
210 S Indian River Dr
Fort Pierce FL 34950-4337

Representative: Dr. William Stoddard
Schulke, Bittle & Stoddard, LLC
1717 Indian River Blvd., Suite 201
Vero Beach, FL 32960

Requested Action: Approval of an application for Site Plan and Conditional Use to expand an existing Private School.

Location: 320 South Indian River Drive

Parcel ID: 2410-804-0003-000-4, 2410-804-0004-000-1, &
2410-808-0001-000-2

Zoning: C-4, Central Commercial & C-1, Office Commercial

Surrounding Zoning:

North	East	South	West
C-4	A-2	C-1	C-4

Future Land Use: CBD, Central Business District

Site Size: 3.98 acres

Utilities: Located within the FPUA Retail Service Area

Staff Analysis:

Request

In accordance with Sections 22-22, 22-58, and 22-76 of the City Code, the applicant is requesting the review and approval of a Site Plan and Conditional Use to complete a phased development plan to expand St. Andrew's Academy. The subject properties are currently zoned C-4, Central Commercial and C-1, Office Commercial and also located within the Downtown Business and Entertainment District. The subject site for expansion is approximately 3.98 acres.

Project Summary

The applicant is requesting approval of a Site Plan and Conditional Use to expand its private school in Downtown. The proposed expansion is presented in four phases, extending through a ten year period. The development plan includes on-site parking; a student loading zone, a multi-use sports field, tiki huts along the waterfront, utility improvements, sidewalks, and storm water management facilities. In addition, there are expansions of classrooms for the upper school operation.

Existing Facility

St. Andrews Episcopal Academy is an existing pre-Kindergarten through 12th grade private school, initiated in the 1970s as an elementary school. The school expanded in 1991, with a 10,732 sq. ft. addition to the principal campus, to increase capacity and provide course offering through 8th grade. In 2014, the school received conditional use approval to reuse an existing structure located at 320 S. Indian River Drive, to establish an upper division school. This facility features a floor area of 8,400 sq. ft. with the recently completed renovations, providing capacity for 60 students, plus faculty and staff.

The current school encompasses 29 classrooms, providing 24 classrooms for students in Pre-k through 8th grade, and 5 classrooms for 9th through 12th grades.

The presented site for expansion features the pre-existing recreational fields, held by St. Andrews for numerous years, as well as vacant property recently acquired for campus expansion.

Development Plan - Phasing

The presented plan is scheduled in four phases, extending across a ten-year period. Collectively, the development plan includes 60,811 sq. ft. of new construction to expand St. Andrew's Academy's capacity and recreational activities. The additions include eighteen (18) additional classrooms, two (2) science labs, gymnasium, and other support amenities. The complete campus build-out represents a total expansion 69,212 sq. ft., including the 2014 addition.

Phase 1- The initial phase, to be initiated upon site plan approval and building permit issuance, includes the completion of a multi-use sports field, tiki huts along the water front, on-site parking, drive aisles and student loading, utility improvements, sidewalks, and storm water management facilities. The construction and dedication of the pedestrian plaza adjacent to Melody Lane, in exchange for the abandonment of a portion of Boston Avenue will be completed with the first phase.

Phase 2- The second phase, scheduled for completion from 2017-2018, includes a 12,587 sq. ft. addition to the upper school.

Phase 3- The third phase, planned for completion in 2019-2020, includes a 15,713 sq. ft. gymnasium and auditorium addition to the campus, and completion of a dock to expand recreational activities along the waterfront.

Phase 4- The fourth and final phase, anticipated for commencement from 2023-2024, includes an expansive 24,523 sq. ft. addition to the middle and upper school.

Design

Pursuant to City Code Section 22-59. (a), design review related to any changes to historic structures, or any new construction on an historic site or in an historic district shall be reviewed by the Historic Preservation Board in lieu of the design review board in accordance with Chapter 23. The Historic Preservation Board reviewed the initial architectural and design plans at their May, 2015 meeting and provided wide-ranging feedback for prospective enhancements and features. The design presented to the Planning Board encompasses the updated plans, based upon the feedback provided. The final design plan will be reviewed by the Historic Preservation Board for consideration of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposed development. The Planning Board is encouraged to provide general feedback regarding the overall design scheme; however final authority is retained by the Historic Preservation Board.

The presented architectural style of the development is a contemporary twist on Mediterranean architecture, exemplified by the selection of a tile roof, use of arches, and instances of varying roof heights. Mediterranean architecture is often distinguished by its restrained, horizontal massing. Components such as smooth plaster walls, light earth tone or off-white colors, deeply set windows and doors, and red tile roofs, or flat roofs, combine to present this eclectic style.

The overall design provides a variety of architectural components, with an improved development of distinguished features and enhancements across the structures, to differentiate elevations and encompass levels. In some instances, limited space and overall site layout present challenges of integrating the site with the Downtown waterfront and corridor; however, the design revisions encompass the addition and embellishment of architectural components to punctuate the structures and their interaction with public space. Landscaping and lighting are notable components that have been integrated to further augment the transition from the abutting sidewalks, roadways, and the site. The applicant, Staff, and the Historic Preservation Board will continue to explore the strategic use of additional architectural features, hardscape enhancements, and complimentary streetscapes to utilize opportunities to enrich the campus expansion and emphasize this development as a notable component of the Downtown waterfront.

Access, Loading, & Parking

Vehicular access to the campus is expanded on South Indian River Drive via an additional two-way driveway towards the center of the site. This entrance will be the primary access for the campus expansion, providing access to the proposed parent pick-up and drop-off lanes, additional twenty-nine (29) vehicular parking spaces, and future entrances to the upper school expansion and gymnasium. Trash collection and off-street loading for deliveries are provided within the interior of the site as well. The applicant's traffic engineer has provided analysis presenting the designed capacity of the parent pick-up and drop-off lanes, to minimize stacking and traffic congestion at the designated entrance.

Pursuant to City Code Section 22-16 (b) (2) & (3) (c) 1., the subject site is exempt from off-street parking requirements, as referenced in section 22-60, based upon its locating within the Downtown Business and Entertainment District. The representative has provided a parking study to present the parking demands and supply for St. Andrews Academy and prospective expansion, as well as, a parking plan to minimize the impacts of the school upon downtown parking.

The presented parking study represents that the existing school demands 88 spaces, based upon City parking guidelines of two spaces per elementary schools, junior high schools classroom, and eight spaces per classroom for high schools. The current facility provides 30 parking spaces, 24 spaces along the north side of the lower

school, and 6 at the upper school. The surplus parking demand is currently accommodated by the St. Lucie County parking lot to the south of the lower school, and various parking sources throughout the Downtown.

The parking study suggests that the proposed expansion necessitates 36 additional spaces, per the same calculations, based upon the addition of one (1) additional classroom for grades 9 through 12 with Phase 2, and the addition six (6) classrooms for the 6th through 8th grades and two (2) classrooms for grades 9th to 12th by buildout. This study only accounts for the addition of nine (9) new classrooms; however the floor plans provided present the addition of eighteen (18) classrooms and two (2) science labs. The delineation of use for middle or high school instruction is not provided to affirm the distribution of demand; however, the figure is presumably between 50 to 100 additional spaces, based upon a complete build out of the intended expansion. The prospective parking demands include additional faculty, intermittent visitation by parents, and student drivers.

The parking plan provided seeks to retain the additional twenty-nine (29) vehicular parking spaces on-site primarily for faculty, utilize the existing six (6) spaces for temporary parking of parents and visitors to the campus, and establish a lease agreement the City of Fort Pierce to provide student parking at the public parking garage at City Hall. This plan seeks to minimize impacts to retail business and governmental offices relying upon surface level parking adjacent to campus. The applicant has expressed a commitment to providing annual updates and revisions to a parking agreement to account for parking demands for students.

The walking distance from the City Parking garage to the campus is approximately a half-mile, presenting an 8-10 minute walk for students.

Stormwater Retention & Landscaping

Stormwater facilities for the proposed impervious areas are presented via underground exfiltration, and the placement of minor detention areas around the recreational field.

Pursuant to City Code Section 22-16 (b) (2) & (3) (c) ., the subject site is exempt from City of Fort Pierce requirements based upon its locating within the Downtown Business and Entertainment District, however the development plan incorporates a landscape plan to provide accent landscaping for enhancement of the campus. A total of 56 new trees are proposed for planting on-site, encompassing a variety of palms, and several canopy trees.

Landscape hedges are proposed along the western property line to provide a buffer between Indian River Drive and proposed parking areas. The design presents minimal interior vehicular use landscaping in order to maximize the quantity of parking spaces provided on-site. The infill of additional landscaping adjacent to vehicular areas and building facades may offer to further complement and enhance the site and overall design scheme.

Sidewalks, Right-of-way, & Lighting

The proposed development plan provides the addition of sidewalks to meet established regulations, providing a connection between Indian River Drive and Melody Lane, various connections to building entrances, and internal linkages throughout the site. Minor sections of right-of-way are proposed for dedication to the city along St. Andrews Lane and Indian River Drive to provide for public access and maintenance.

A lighting plan was provided with initial submittal of the development plan, reflecting previous versions of the site layout. It is requested that an updated lighting plan, matching the presented site layout is provided. Furthermore, it is requested that the lighting plan provide the proposed light fixture design for campus lighting, and illumination of the recreational field.

Traffic Impacts

The traffic impact study encompasses analysis of the existing roadway networks and traffic activities, with regards to the phased expansion and corresponding traffic impacts anticipated. The facility presently enrolls approximately 275 students. The initial traffic impact figure anticipates the enrollment of 80 additional students, representing an increase of 198 average daily trips from the campus. Of these projected trips, 65 are AM peak hour, and 14 PM peak hour.

The traffic impact analysis further studied the completion of the remaining campus additions and enrollment increase of 388 students, providing and estimated increase of 962 average daily trips. Of these projected trips, 314 are AM peak hour, and 66 PM peak hour.

The trip generation data for the campus expansion was coupled with the existing traffic demands of the school, at current capacity and enrolment, to provide the overall traffic impacts prospective of the campus upon completion. The traffic impact analysis representing the complete campus build-out and total student enrollment of 698, from Pre-K to 12th grade, reflects 1,864 average daily trips. Of these anticipated trips, 565 are AM peak hour, and 163 PM peak hour.

The projected trip assignment for the school was compiled and presented in order to explore the potential impacts to adjoining roadway networks, based upon the increased traffic demands. A notable portion of the anticipated trips are ascribed to the Citrus Avenue overpass, both travelling to and leaving the campus. The traffic impact to the intersections of Citrus Avenue and US Highway 1, and Orange Avenue and US Highway 1, present the greatest significance based upon establish configurations and experienced deficiencies.

The analysis presented by the applicant concludes that all of the surrounding roadway segments are expected to operate at their current adopted level of service (LOS) with the additional trips. Staff is coordinating with a traffic consultant to further analyze the presented impacts, trip assignment to deficient intersections, and the timeline of the proposed development to further review and consider potential proportionate fair-share contributions to assist in mitigating the additional impacts. An update will be provided to the Planning Board as review comments and conclusions are generated by the consulting engineer.

Comprehensive Plan

The subject property is designated with a Central Business District (CBD) future land use. The CBD designation provides opportunity for mixed-use high-rise development, and single-use or mixed-use development that includes ground floor office/retail beneath residential apartments and condominiums. Furthermore, the CBD is intended to provide higher density mixed-use development within downtown Fort Pierce. Uses within the CBD shall include residential (condominiums and apartments); office including artist work and sales space; retail including boutiques, cafes, and restaurants; fuel sales; hotels/motels; parks and recreation; governmental facilities; complementary parks and parking facilities.

The proposed development plan provides compact and intensive development of campus facilities, in a pattern that orients a portion of the development to the street, with the integration of streetscape and civic spaces, as presented with the pedestrian plaza, placement of the Gymnasium, and sidewalk connections along the site. The nature of the school facility encompasses private aspects to provide safety and security for students, while integrating the campus to this southern portion of Downtown.

Technical Review Committee

All affected departments have reviewed and conditionally approved the Site Plan and Conditional Use based on compliance with the requirements of the City Code.

Staff Recommendation:

The proposed Site Plan and Conditional Use meets the requirements of the City Code and is found to be consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan; therefore Staff recommends that the Planning Board forward a recommendation to the City Commission for approval of the requests with the following conditions:

1. The applicant provides an updated site lighting plan, reflecting the current site plan and requirements of City Code Sections 22-59. Design review, prior to consideration by the City Commission;
2. The applicant finalizes a proposed parking plan to include an agreement with the City of Fort Pierce to utilize the public parking garage for all off-site student parking, or other acceptable commercial parking lot;
3. The applicant provides a designated drop-off and pick-up location plan for the lower school, on-site at the northern portion of the campus, to avoid conflicts with the public parking lot and access to the future Melody Lane Fishing Pier;
4. The applicant shall record and provide a recorded copy of a Unity of Title combining the subject parcels prior to issuance of a building permit;
5. The applicant shall provide an Owner and Encumbrances title search for each of the right-of-way (R.O.W.) dedications presented prior to the issuance of building permit; and
6. The applicant shall record and provide a recorded copy of said R.O.W. dedications and/or R.O.W. easements prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy.