



CITY OF FORT PIERCE

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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

TO: Robert J. Bradshaw, City Manager
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: August 7, 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 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, gymnasium, tiki huts along the waterfront, utility improvements, sidewalks, and storm water management facilities. In addition, there are expansions of classrooms for the middle and upper school operations.

Existing Facility

St. Andrew's 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. Andrew's 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) new classrooms, two (2) science labs, gymnasium, conversion of current classrooms into offices and resource labs, 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

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 actively explored strategic use of architectural features, hardscape enhancements, and complimentary streetscapes to develop opportunities to enrich the campus expansion and emphasize this development as a notable component of the Downtown waterfront.

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 final design plan was approved by the Historic Preservation Board at their July 27th, 2015 meeting, with the following conditions:

- 1) The applicant further develop the landscape plan to provide detail and features to improve the transition between the existing sidewalk grade and future grade of the parking area and southern grounds of the campus; and
- 2) The applicant finalize the height and design of the recreational field light fixtures to ensure the additions do not adversely impact the Downtown Historic District and design scheme of the development plan.

The applicant has provided an updated landscape plan, with additional landscape features to account for condition #1, however the selection of a final light fixture design has been deferred until permitting. Staff will continue to coordinate with the applicant to ensure compliance with the noted condition.

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. Andrew's 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. 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 75 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 and teachers.

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.

Site lighting will be provided for the parking area and the perimeter of the proposed structure in accordance with City Code requirements, as presented in the lighting plan. The final light fixture design for

campus lighting and illumination of the recreational field will be coordinated with staff to ensure consistency with design review guidelines and the character of Historic Downtown.

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 coordinated 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; however no direct recommendations for roadway improvements were generated at this time. The City of Fort Pierce is actively coordinating with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to permit and construct a designated right-turn lane from Orange Avenue onto US Highway 1, which will improve transportation from Downtown. The divided nature of South Indian River Drive, and limited right-of-way limit the capacity for potential transportation improvement options.

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.

Boston Avenue Abandonment & Development Agreement

The City Commission, at their September 2nd, 2014 meeting, approved Ordinance 14-018 to Abandon Boston Avenue east of South Indian River Drive. The approval is contingent upon the following:

- 1) The successful entry and execution of a Developer's Agreement between the City of Fort Pierce and St. Andrew's Episcopal Academy & Church, providing for and addressing, among other matters: The design, construction, and conveyance of a Pedestrian Plaza Parcel, provisions for the repair and maintenance of the bulkhead; and Unity of Title between parcels owned by the applicants.
- 2) Approval of a Final Site Plan for the St. Andrew's school expansion not later than twelve (12) months from the date of final passage of the Ordinance.

The presented Site Plan and Conditional Use development plan and package includes the finalized Developer's Agreement for consideration by the City Commission, and expansion plans consistent with conditions of the Ordinance. The abandonment of the subject segment of Boston Avenue will become effective upon approval of the noted development components, and successful execution of the Developer's Agreement.

Technical Review Committee

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

Planning Board Recommendation:

The Planning Board, at their July 14th, 2015 meeting, voted unanimously to recommend approval of the requested Site Plan and Conditional Use with the conditions recommended by Staff, as well as a request for St. Andrew's representatives to meet with the Parking Committee regarding the proposed development and parking plan. The St. Andrew's team presented the development plan to the Parking Committee on August 5, 2015, providing detail of the proposed on-site parking, and proposed agreement with the City of Fort Pierce to lease spacing in the parking garage for student and teacher parking.

Property Owner Response Summary:

A total of 28 notifications of the proposed Site Plan and Conditional Use were mailed to the owners of property located within 500 feet of the subject property. As of August 7, 2015, 0 responses have been received. An update will be provided to the City Commission at the public hearing.

Staff Recommendation:

The proposed Site Plan and Conditional Use meets the requirements of the City Code and are found to be consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan; therefore Staff recommends that the City Commission approve 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 shall record and provide a recorded copy of a Unity of Title combining the subject parcels prior to issuance of a building permit;
3. The City Commission accept the proposal from St. Andrew's to utilize the City's parking garage; and

4. The City Commission approve the final Developer's Agreement presented by St. Andrew's Episcopal Academy and Church.