



Civil Engineering • Land Surveying • Land Planning

March 23, 2023
Revised April 27, 2023

Town of Warrenton
Department of Community Development
PO Box 341
Warrenton, Virginia 20188

**RE: St. John The Evangelist Office Building
Special Use Permit Application (SUP 23-1)
Amendment to SUP dated June 3, 1986
Comment Response – Planning 1st Review Comments dated March 13, 2023
Carson LC Project # 00013-500**

Dear Town Staff;

This letter is in response to the comment letter dated March 13, 2023 regarding the above-referenced SUP Amendment submission. In the letter you provided plan review comments from staff for the 1st submission review. The following are the review comments, followed by our responses to those comments.

Zoning Review

Article 2-19 - Fences and Walls

No height is noted for the proposed retaining wall. Be aware that retaining walls cannot exceed 6' in height. (2-19.1 ZO)

Response: The exact height of the retaining wall is undetermined at this stage of development. Before the expense of final design and site and structural engineering, approval of the new building location is appropriate. Upon SUP approval then final design process will determine the exact wall height. All effort will be made to reduce the wall height below 6' height. It should be noted that the existing building foundation wall is driving this retaining wall location, an attempt to preserve the stone façade will be made. Additionally, the ordinance in this section provides remedies for walls exceeding 6' in height. If the wall height is determined to be over 6', then the appropriate process and permits will be obtained.

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Article 3.4.2- Residential (R-10) District

Note the building height being requested and if over the maximum height, indicate whether the setback was increased to accommodate the additional building height. In addition, please provide building height dimensions on all elevations shown on Sheet 4 of the plan. (3-4.2.5.1 ZO)

Clarification: Staff cannot verify building height and setback requirements have been met based on the information provided; further review will be required as a part of the site development plan.

Response: The building height calculation will be calculated using the average proposed grade along the outside of the building. Variations in the final site grading will change the building height calculation. In general, the proposed building height will be approximately 35' or less. No additional setback will be required.

Article 3-5.3- Historic District (HD)

The subject property is located within the Historic District; the applicant must obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Architectural Review Board for proposed improvements. (3-5.3.4.2 ZO)

Response: The applicant has worked with ARB and will provide application following the SUP process.

Article 7 – Parking

Staff cannot verify parking and loading space requirements are met throughout the site. No parking tabulation has been provided. The statement of justification states parking requirements will be addressed at the time of site development plan.

Clarification: Applicant acknowledges that parking requirements must be met at the time of site development plan.

Response: The overall parking tabulation has been provided on sheet 1 of the plat. The approximate number of parking spaces has been provided. It is estimated that approximately (±) 38 spaces will be added to the site. The final parking tabulation for the overall site will be determined at time of site development plan.

Article 8 - Landscaping

No new landscaping is proposed on the SUP Plan. Staff is unable to verify ordinance requirements, which will be required at time of site plan submission. (8-4.1 ZO)

Clarification: Applicant acknowledges that landscaping requirements must be reviewed as part of the site development plan.

Response: Perimeter and internal landscaping requirements cannot be determined until final site design. It is inappropriate to provide detailed locations of tree and shrub

plantings at this stage of development. Dimensional and grading details will alter the location and types of plantings in final design stage. The Applicant proposes to provide all required landscaping and buffering at time of final site plan.

Perimeter parking lot landscaping is required between the 14 new parking spaces and the northern boundary line, to consist of a minimum 5-foot wide buffer area planted with one canopy tree and three shrubs per 50 linear feet. A retaining wall is located between the parking area and the property, reducing the available area to provide the required buffer. The special permit plat should be revised to show an alternate method to decrease the visibility of the parking lot to an equal or better degree than the required trees and shrubs. (8-6.1 20)

Clarification: Staff cannot verify that landscaping requirements can be met as a part of the site development plan with the information provided; applicant acknowledges that landscaping requirements must be reviewed as part of the site development plan.

Response: A typical detail has been added to the plan to address this area of concern. As stated in a previous comment concerning the existing wall to remain, it is the Applicant's intent (if possible) to utilize the existing wall as a retaining wall. It is proposed to use the wall to partially block the parking area from view in addition to a single row of evergreen shrubs. This will provide adequate screening of the parking adjacent to the property line.

A buffer yard is required between the proposed office building and the northern property line, to consist of 25 feet, plus 1 foot for each foot of building height over 35 feet, per Table 8-8.5; from the information provided this requirement is not met. The special permit plat should be revised to show that the required buffer width is provided. (8-8.4.1 20)

Clarification: Applicant acknowledges that landscaping requirements must be reviewed as part of the site development plan.

Response: The minimum buffer yard of 25' has been provided on the plat. Building height will be under 35 feet. The Applicant intends to meet the buffer requirements as set forth in the zoning ordinance. The exact buffering plantings are not indicated on the plat at this time, because exact plantings will be subject to change. Locations and number of plantings, meeting ordinance requirements, will be provided at time of final site plan.

Article 9-8 - Lighting

No lighting plan or fixture details are provided on the SUP plan. Staff is unable to verify Ordinance requirements are met. Lighting plan review will be required as part of the Site Development Plan. Given that the proposed office building and parking areas are located adjacent to and up-slope from residential-use areas, the approval authority may wish to consider an approval condition aimed at decreasing potential negative impacts on neighboring residences, such as limiting the height of parking lot pole lights and building-mounted fixtures, or limiting the average horizontal illumination level.

Response: The Town already has requirements to reduce illumination level onto adjacent property. At the time of final site plan a photometric plan will be required meeting the zoning ordinance. Applicant will address lighting with the final site plan and the Town will be able to review and approve the lighting plan in accordance with current zoning ordinance.

Planning Review

1986 SUP Approval

Town Council Meeting Minutes from June 3, 1986, indicate St. John Catholic School and Church at 271 Winchester Street obtained approval in two phases with the condition of resolution of the street right-of-ways. The Arlington Diocese owned to the centerline of Winchester and King(now John E. Mann) streets.

Staff Comment:

Since the SUP was approved, the church and school have both been expanded. The Town worked with the Applicant during the intervening years until the latest expansion when it was noted that any further activities on the property would require a comprehensive site plan update to ensure the total uses on the property are compiled on one approved master site plan (see PW Memo dated 2/2/2017). While it appears the right-of-way to the centerline of King Street was addressed previously, the property line still extends to the centerline of Winchester Street.

Clarification: The Applicant included the right-of-way on Winchester Street on Sheet 3 of the SUP Plan. However, the proposed dedication includes the existing stone wall and apron on to the parcel that is currently owned and maintained by the property owner. The staff proposed Conditions of Approval will address at time of public hearing Staff Analysis.

Response: Currently the standard required 25' dedication is shown on the Plat. Perhaps the Town would be open to a reduced dedication such that the existing stone wall remains on the subject property.

Transportation and Circulation Goals

Winchester Street is designated as a Signature Street with a desired multi-modal Complete Street in Plan Warrenton 2040. Among the many goals, this includes:

T-1: Improve multi-modal capacity and safety that encourages trips by walking, bicycling, and transit.

T-3 Promote livability in the Town by creating great places for residents and visitors to feel welcome and safe.

Staff Comment:

The Applicant does not provide any analysis within the Statement of Justification as to whether the proposal is consistent with the comprehensive plan. Further, the church is in a location that is a gateway to Old Town and adjacent to residential neighborhoods. The school backs up traffic daily during drop off and pick up times. The church hosts many popular



community events with parking overflowing into the adjacent Conway Grove neighborhood, and Town residents complain about speeding along the roadways adjacent to the church. Please address how this SUP meets the goals of the comprehensive plan.

Clarification: The Applicant has not addressed the transportation issues that exist with the uses on the property. Staff will include in Staff Analysis provided at time of public hearing.

Response: The applicant has addressed the comprehensive plan in the statement of justification. Additional parking is being provided on the site which should alleviate overflow parking into neighborhoods. See previous zoning comment on parking. John E Mann Street connects Alexandria Pike and Winchester Street. All three roads are public right of way. Enforcement of speeding on public road system is best enforced by the proper authority. We are unsure of the connection to this complaint and the current application for relocation of the existing office building.

Overall Criteria for Evaluation

The Statement of Justification includes the 32 criteria but does not provide analysis, information, or evaluation for decision makers. For example, the Applicant does not provide hours of operation, number of employees, timing or anticipated length of development, the location of refuse and service areas, or the proposed landscaping. These items, and others not answered, are commonly provided with SUP applications and considered by the decision makers as part of the process. Please address in the resubmission.

Comment Remains/Clarification: The staff will include in Staff Analysis provided at time of public hearing.

Response: The applicant has addressed the overall criteria in the statement of justification. It is important to note that this SUP amendment proposes no changes to the existing application only change in location of the building and additional parking which would help to alleviate a transportation/parking concern. Additionally, no new refuse location for this use is needed on site, as such no location proposed with this application.

Conditions of Approval and SUP Plan

The second submission normally includes the Applicant's suggested Conditions of Approval with the SUP Plan Amendment. Please include the previously approved documents with redlines to illustrate the proposed changes with the SUP Amendment.

Clarification: The staff proposed Conditions of Approval will be addressed at time of public hearing Staff Analysis.

Response: Provided suggested language for a demolition commitment condition.



Should you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact Carson LC by email at jonc@carsonlc.com, or jim@carsonlc.com, or by telephone at 540-347-9191.

On behalf of Carson Land Consultants,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jonathan Castellano". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line extending from the end.

By: Jonathan Castellano, PE, Senior Engineer