



# CITY OF SAN MATEO

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## Agenda Report

Agenda Number: 20

Section Name: {{section.name}}

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**TO:** City Council  
**FROM:** Drew Corbett, City Manager  
**PREPARED BY:** Community Development  
**MEETING DATE:** June 03, 2019

Revised

**SUBJECT:**

1 Carey School Lane - Zoning Reclassification

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Introduce an Ordinance for a Zoning Code Amendment and Zoning Reclassification from R1-B (One Family Dwellings) to R1-B/Q8 (One Family Dwellings, Qualified Overlay District 8) and adopt a Resolution to approve the Site Plan and Architectural Review and Special Use Permit Modification for a property located at 1 Carey School Lane subject to the Conditions of Approval.

**BACKGROUND:**

The Carey School is a private educational facility with grades pre-kindergarten to fifth grade that has occupied its current campus located at 1 Carey School Lane since 1955. The school currently holds a Special Use Permit that places specific provisions for parking requirements, maximum enrollment, and maximum full-time equivalent (FTE) staffing, which most recently was modified in 2012 to permit a maximum of 249 students, 47 FTE staff, and a classroom addition.

The school filed a planning application in November of 2018 to modify their Special Use Permit to increase allowable student enrollment by nine students and FTE staff by five employees. The school is also requesting to add 6,006 square feet to an existing classroom building and place two 1,020 square foot temporary portable classroom buildings on site during construction of the classroom addition. Because the campus exceeds the site's existing maximum floor area ratio (FAR), a Zoning Reclassification would be required to provide the site a higher FAR.

The Planning Commission held a Study Session on October 23, 2018 to review the proposed classroom addition design and zoning reclassification, and traffic and parking were also discussed. The Planning Commission spoke in favor of the classroom building's design but expressed concern for the school expansion's potential impact to traffic. On April 23, 2019, the Planning Commission held a Public Hearing and spoke in favor of the classroom building design and indicated that concerns regarding the school's pick-up and drop-off operations had been alleviated. Although there was a lot of discussion related to the lack of local benefits and the off-site parking agreement, the one Commissioner who did not recommend approval of the project stated that he does not support the increase in the enrollment due to the impact to the neighborhood. The Planning Commission ultimately recommended City Council approval of the project with a vote of 4-1 with modifications to two Conditions of Approval. The first modified Condition is for the school's off-site parking agreement during construction of the project, and the second is for neighborhood notification of special school events.

**Site Description**

The Carey School campus, located at 1 Carey School Lane, consists of two parcels totaling approximately 2.2 acres in size and is zoned R1-B (One Family Dwellings). The site is located along Alameda de las Pulgas to the west and Junipero Serra High School to the east, and also borders single-family residences along 22nd Avenue to the south and single-family residences along La Salle Drive to the north. The General Plan Land Use Plan designates the project site as Single Family.

The campus consists of both one and two-story classroom buildings totaling approximately 29,952 square feet. The site also consists of an upper and lower play yard, outdoor courtyard, and 27 on-site parking spaces. A site location map showing the project site's vicinity is included in [Attachment 3](#).

## **Project Description**

### Campus Improvements

The project involves construction of a 6,006 square-foot, two-story addition to an existing classroom building. The proposed addition consists of four classrooms, a multi-purpose room, and private meeting rooms. The architectural style of the proposed building would match the existing campus buildings. Two 1,020 square-foot temporary portable buildings with two classrooms each would be on site for the duration of construction, which is estimated to be 10 months, to be located in an existing play yard adjacent to Junipero Serra High School. Because the classroom addition includes rebuilding a portion of the existing classroom building, the net floor area increase of the campus is 4,286 square-feet, inclusive of the temporary portable classroom buildings. New landscaping, shade canopies, and walking surfaces in the school's courtyard space are also proposed. The project plans showing all proposed campus improvements are included in [Attachment 4](#). The project was submitted for design review by the City's design review consultant, Larry Cannon of Cannon Design Group. Larry Cannon's design review letter, which had no recommendations for changes to the design, is included in [Attachment 5](#).

## **Requested Approvals**

### Zoning Reclassification

To allow for floor area expansion of the school's campus, the project requires a Zoning Reclassification from the site's current zoning designation of R1-B (One Family Dwellings) to R1-B/Q8 (One Family Dwellings, Qualified Overlay District 8). Other Q (Qualified Overlay District) overlays have been approved in the past for other sites to provide development standards that reflect the unique land use and physical characteristics of a site.

The school's existing zoning designation of R1-B permits an overall floor area ratio (FAR) of 0.21, which the current campus exceeds. The allowable FAR in R1 districts is lower than that of other districts given the single-family, low-density character of R1 neighborhoods. The primary function of the school's Q8 overlay would be to provide a higher floor area ratio (FAR) at 0.39 to permit additional floor area. Q overlays have been approved in the past for other private schools located in R1 districts such as Junipero Serra High School (Q6) and St. Matthew's Catholic Parish and School (Q7). These Q overlays have provided the schools with a controlled expansion of their respective campuses and have removed nonconformities related to floor area.

An amendment to the Zoning Code is required to codify the proposed Q8 overlay development standards in Zoning Code Chapter 27.60, which include the maximum FAR provisions described above. A factual data sheet showing the applicable and requested development standards, and the project's conformance to them, is included in [Attachment 6](#).

### Special Use Permit Modification and Site Plan and Architectural Review.

The project includes a modification to the school's existing Special Use Permit to increase enrollment by nine students (249 students to 258 students), and to increase employment by five full-time equivalent (FTE) staff (47 FTE staff to 52 FTE staff). The school's existing Special Use Permit permits off-site parking to fulfill the school's minimum parking ratio, which is one space per employee. The school maintains a parking agreement for off-site parking for faculty and for special school events at a nearby office park at 1900-2000 Alameda de las Pulgas. The school's Special Use Permit would be modified to require additional off-site parking given the request for additional FTE staff. Because the school voluntarily leased an excess amount of parking spaces in their last Special Use Permit Modification in 2012, the school is required to lease just one additional off-site parking space.

In reviewing the Site Plan and Architectural Review for the campus improvements, the Planning Commission Chair commented that the classroom building and courtyard designs appear compatible with the design of the existing campus.

## **Project Issues**

### Off-Site Parking Agreement

The Planning Commission expressed concern regarding the school's ability to maintain the parking agreement with the office park at 1900-2000 Alameda de las Pulgas. The Commission highlighted that the office park is largely vacant, which may result in redevelopment in the near future and could put the school at risk of losing its parking agreement. If the parking agreement is terminated, Condition of Approval #51 "Off-Site Parking" requires that the school either acquire a new parking agreement within 30 days of termination or reduce the number of FTE staff to comply with the minimum parking ratio. The City's Zoning Code also requires that the off-site parking facilities be located in a walking distance of no more than 200 feet from the school as a nonresidential use in a residential zone. Given this requirement, the school has limited options in leasing parking spaces elsewhere in the vicinity.

The school, however, has continuously maintained a parking agreement with the adjacent office park. The agreement is for one year, and has allowed for annual renewal. The school's current parking agreement for off-site parking is included in Attachment 7. Because this current agreement does not include special event parking and expires around the school's expected start of construction, staff presented Condition of Approval #10 "Off Site Parking Agreement" to the Planning Commission to require that the school provide the City with a copy of an executed, updated parking agreement prior to issuance of the subsequent building permit.

Given the concern for the school's ongoing ability to retain off-site parking, the Commission modified Condition of Approval #10 to require that the school provide the City a copy of an executed parking agreement that specifies a length of two years from project approval prior to building permit issuance. The project's applicant, Duncan Lyon, Head of the Carey School, recognized the school's risk of losing off-site parking, but highlighted the difficulty in obtaining a longer lease. Mr. Lyon noted that the office park property manager, Bridge Commercial Real Estate, may not agree to a lease longer than one year given that the school has historically maintained a yearly lease, which has for many years conformed with the school's previous Conditions of Approval.

### Traffic and Pick-Up and Drop-Off Operations

The City's transportation consultant, Hexagon, conducted a Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) and concluded that the school's expansion would not result in noticeable impacts to traffic in the school's vicinity (Attachment 8). The Planning Commission expressed concern regarding the school's circulation and traffic impacts at the October 2018 Study Session. However, one Planning Commissioner specifically noted that these issues had been addressed based on personal observations during a recent site visit. Condition of Approval #52, carried over from the school's previous Special Use Permit Modification, requires that the school provide parents with a Parking and Traffic Plan annually to standardize pick-up and drop-off times and locations. The school's Parking and Traffic Plan for the 2018-2019 school year is included in Attachment 9.

### **Public Comments**

Public comments received during the pre-application and the formal planning application are included in Attachment 10. The public comments pertain to traffic, parking, and construction impacts. In response to a public comment received pertaining to public notification of special school events, Condition of Approval #55 "Facility Use Calendar" has been implemented to require the school notify neighbors within a specific radius of special school events. The Planning Commission also modified this Condition to increase the radius from 300 feet to 500 feet.

### **BUDGET IMPACT:**

This is a private development project that will not have a fiscal impact to the City.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION:**

The project is Categorical Exempt pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, Class 14 Section 15314 since the project represents an addition to an existing school facility where the addition does not increase student capacity by more than 25% or ten classrooms.

### **NOTICE PROVIDED**

In accordance with Government Code section 65090, notice of this meeting was published in the San Mateo Daily Journal

newspaper at least ten days before this public hearing. In accordance with Government Code section 65091 and the City's Municipal Code noticing requirements, this hearing was noticed to the following parties ten days in advance of the City Council meeting:

- Property owners, residential tenants, and business tenants within 1,000 feet of the project site;
- The City's "900 List", which contains nearly 100 Homeowner Associations, Neighborhood Associations, local utilities, media, and other organizations interested in citywide planning projects;
- The City's Planning "Notify Me" email list; and,
- The interested parties list, which includes interested individuals who contacted the City and requested to be added to the project notification list.

#### **ATTACHMENTS**

Att 1 – Proposed Resolution

Att 2 – Proposed Ordinance

Att 3 – Location Map

Att 4 – Project Plans

Att 5 – Design Review Letter January 11, 2019

Att 6 – Factual Data Sheet

Att 7 – Parking Agreement

Att 8 – Traffic Impact Analysis March 20, 2019

Att 9 – Parking and Traffic Plan 2018-2019

Att 10 – Public Comments

#### **STAFF CONTACT**

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