

Minutes of the
Planning and Zoning Commission of the City of Cherry Hills Village, Colorado
Held on Tuesday, November 12, 2013 at 6:30 p.m.
At the Village Center

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Christman called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present at the meeting were the following Planning and Zoning Commissioners: Chair Laura Christman, Vice Chair Peter Savoie, Commissioner Jim Rubin, Commissioner Steve Szymanski and Commissioner David Wyman.

Present at the meeting were the following staff members: Robert Zuccaro, Community Development Director, and Emily Kropf, Special Projects Coordinator.

Absent was Commissioner Al Blum.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Vice Chair Savoie made a motion, which was seconded by Commissioner Wyman, to accept the October 8, 2013 minutes.

The motion passed unanimously.

AGENDA ITEMS

Preliminary Application Review – St. Mary's Academy Request for Expanded Use Permit to Build an Approximately 22,722 Square-Foot Community Center Building

Mr. Zuccaro stated that staff is presenting a preliminary application review of a proposal to build an approximately 22,772 square-foot, two-story community center building. The purpose of the preliminary review is to provide feedback to the applicant prior to submittal of the full application. Once the full application is submitted, there will be public hearings before the Commission and City Council.

Mr. Zuccaro continued that the St. Mary's Academy campus is zoned R-1, 2 ½-Acre Residential District. Surrounding zoning and land uses include R-1 and R-3 zoned residential properties. The proposed building is located south of the existing middle school building, approximately 175 feet from the closest property boundary to the west. The proposed space is intended to provide additional space for lower and middle school activities that are currently located in the high school and to provide dedicated middle school foreign language and music and drama spaces.

Mr. Zuccaro said that the height of the building is proposed at 34 feet and 4 inches above the midpoint elevation, which is 4 feet and 4 inches taller than the existing middle school. From the finished grade on the west side of the building, the overall height is proposed at 44 feet and 10 inches. The total proposed finished floor area of the campus, including the community center, is 166,520 square feet, resulting in a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 15.5%. Other site improvements include a slight relocation of a concrete fire lane and sidewalks and exterior lighting surrounding the building.

Mr. Zuccaro stated that the applicant has provided some preliminary drainage information. Part of the previous addition of the middle school in 1999 was the construction of a detention pond on the northwest corner of the campus. According to the applicant, the proposed community center will add an additional 17,000 square feet of impervious surface to the campus. The developed runoff from the expansion will drain into the existing detention pond, which is large enough to accommodate the new impervious surface.

Mr. Zuccaro said that when the middle school was built in 1999, staff determined that there were a total of 323 parking spaces required and a total of 332 would be provided. There are currently 343 parking spaces on campus. Based on building uses together with the proposed community center expansion, the resulting number of spaces required is 369, leading to a shortage of 26 spaces. Rather than construct additional parking, the applicant has proposed a parking reduction of 7% in accordance with Municipal Code Section 16-16-10(c), which allows a parking reduction of up to 40% if the applicant can demonstrate that the parking needs of the use will be adequately served.

Mr. Zuccaro continued that the applicant's main justification for the reduction is that the Bishop Evans Gym, which requires 91 spaces based on minimum zoning requirements for assembly space, is not used for school events until after the school day ends. Thus, when there is a parking demand for the gym after school hours, parking demands from other uses that occur only during the school hours will not be present.

Mr. Zuccaro stated that the applicant will address the Commission if there are no questions for staff.

Ms. Diana Rael of Norris Design, 1101 Bannock Street, Denver, Colorado, 80204, stated that the applicant submitted a sketch plan approximately two months ago to staff for review. The applicant also held a community outreach meeting regarding the proposed building in October 2013 for surrounding residents. The proposed start date of the addition is June 2014 and the anticipated end date is March 2015. The applicant does not intend to add students to the campus but create a more modern space for learning and teaching. The proposed building will create a space that bridges the gap between the lower and middle school and the high school. Currently drama and music classes for lower students are held in the high school.

Mr. Michael Roybal of the Roybal Corporation, 7600 E. Eastman Avenue, Denver, Colorado, 80231, stated that the entrance will be located on the southwest side of the building. There will be a lobby area and multipurpose room for events, as well as offices, restrooms, kitchen facility, practice rooms and storage areas. There will also be a separate entry for the day care facility. Classrooms for music and drama are proposed to be located in the lower level of the building. The exterior of the building is intended to match the current architecture of the campus.

Chair Christman asked what the difference in regards to parking between a lunch room and a classroom.

Mr. Zuccaro replied that there is a per classroom parking requirement. The parking requirement for an assembly space is based on the number of fixed seats or the square footage if there are no fixed seats.

Chair Christman asked if the lunch room is being used as an assembly space.

Mr. Roybal stated that the space is to be used mostly as a lunch room, but it can also be used for special events.

Ms. Rael replied that assemblies for the lower school are held in the lower school gym.

Mr. Zuccaro said that the applicant might need to work on defining the space in order to determine how to count parking.

Chair Christman asked if the applicant does not want to make the space available for other events. She added that she would like to see the applicant work through the parking restrictions rather than restricting use of the room.

Ms. Rael said that it is a good suggestion.

Commissioner Rubin asked if the existing parking lots are close to capacity on a regular school day.

Ms. Rael responded no. She said that there are usually only 10 cars in the lower school lot and the middle and high school parking lot is probably 75% full.

Chair Christman stated that she has been to the campus for competitions and has had to wait for a parking space.

Ms. Rael added that there is a parking arrangement with Cherry Hills Country Club for special events, as well.

Commissioner Savoie asked if the new building will be used for shows and concerts.

Ms. Rael said no. The forum was recently renovated and is used for performing arts events.

Commissioner Savoie asked if there will be any food preparation in the cafeteria.

Ms. Rael responded no. She added that the extended day care and junior kindergarten will be relocated to the new building, and the goal is to create a lobby for the high school where the day care was located. Currently there is no central landing for the high school.

Chair Christman said that the proposal is consistent with other requests. She added that she does not want the applicant to unreasonably limit use of the space and parking.

Ms. Rael replied that she followed the review process for the field house at Kent Denver and attended the City Council hearing.

Chair Christman stated that there are other applicants that have had requested similar parking reductions.

Commissioner Rubin said that the proposed building fits in nicely with the existing structures on campus.

Commissioner Szymanski agreed. He added that the applicant might want to plan for an issue that might arise in 10 years.

Vice Chair Savoie asked if there is a master plan for the entire site.

Ms. Rael replied no but the applicant has discussed it.

Vice Chair Savoie asked what the current student body is.

Ms. Rael responded that the current body consists of 670 students and the maximum allowed is 840.

Commissioner Szymanski asked when the highest number of students was enrolled.

Ms. Rael replied that the student body was close to 800 in the 1980's and early 1990's.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:12 p.m.



Laura Christman, Chair



Robert A. Zuccaro,
Community Development Director