



Planning Commission Staff Report

September 13, 2006
Item 6.c.

SUBJECT: PCUP-155/PDR-513

**APPLICANT/
PROPERTY OWNER:** Trinity Lutheran Church of Pleasanton

PURPOSE: Workshop to review and provide comments for a proposal for an expansion that includes: 1) the replacement of the existing temporary modular buildings with the construction of a one-story, approximately 8,110 square foot education building to the east of the existing church facility; 2) the construction of an approximately 3,108 square foot multipurpose room addition attached to the south of the existing church facility, fronting Hopyard Road, 3) expansion of the existing parking lot, and 4) on-site landscaping removal and replanting.

GENERAL PLAN: Medium Density Residential (2-8 DU/acre)

ZONING: R-1-6,500 (Single Family Residential, 6,500 square feet minimum lot size) District

LOCATION: 1225 Hopyard Road

ATTACHMENTS:

- Exhibit A – Written Narratives, dated “Received February 23, 2006”; Site Plan, Floor Plan, and Elevations, dated “Received, June 30, 2006”; Alternate Site Plan, dated “Received, September 6, 2006”
- Exhibit B -- Planning Commission Discussion Points
- Exhibit C -- Neighborhood Meeting Summaries
- Exhibit D -- Comments from Neighbors
- Exhibit E -- Master Site Plan (1999)
- Exhibit F -- Arborist Report
- Location Map

I. BACKGROUND

Trinity Lutheran Church obtained its conditional use permit (UP-67-2) and design review approvals in 1967 for the construction of an approximately 4,760 square foot church facility that included a sanctuary, classrooms, administrative offices and a total of 69 parking spaces. Access to the parking is from Golden Road.

In 1993, Trinity Lutheran Church received design approval to install temporary modular buildings to the northwest of the church building. The modular buildings were to house children in Sunday school as well as those enrolled in an on-site preschool program (Sonshine Preschool).

In 1999, Trinity Lutheran Church received a condition use permit (UP-99-40) and design review (Z-99-21) to expand the church facility and parking lot that has access from Del Valle Parking. Included in the project package was a master site plan showing the general sitting for a future sanctuary expansion to the southwest of the church, and a future freestanding two-story education building located to the north of the sanctuary. The education building was to provide a permanent location for the preschool and a meeting location for Christian study groups. In addition, conditions of approval allowed the modular buildings to remain on site until June 2006 in anticipation of the construction and completion of the education building. This condition was further extended to June 2007.

Trinity Lutheran Church is now ready to complete its final phase expansion. The proposed expansion before the Planning Commission conforms to the general sitting as shown on the master site plan. Accompanied with this proposal, the applicants submitted an arborist report evaluating construction impact upon the existing trees.

II. SITE DESCRIPTION

Trinity Lutheran Church is located on the northeast corner of Hopyard Road and Del Valle Parkway on an approximately 3.14-acre parcel. The lot also fronts Golden Road.

The subject lot is relatively flat. In addition to the buildings, the site has two parking lots, the west parking lot has access from Golden Road, and the east parking lot has access from Del Valle Parkway.

Located on the adjacent parcel to the west of the site is Early Year Day Care which is not affiliated with the church. Trinity Lutheran entered into an agreement for Early Year Day Care

to use a portion of the church's parking lot during weekdays. A private swim center is located to the north, and Harvest Park is located to the east. Residential uses surround the site located across Golden Road, Del Valle Parkway to the southwest, and to the west, across Hopyard Road.

III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed development includes the following:

- Replacement of the existing temporary modular buildings with the construction of a one-story, approximately 8,110 square foot education building to the east of the existing church facility;
- Construction of an approximately 3,108 square foot multipurpose room addition attached to the south of the existing church facility, fronting Hopyard Road;
- Expansion of the existing parking lot; and,
- On-site landscaping and upgrading the existing materials by removal and replanting.

As previously mentioned, the education building is to provide a permanent location, as indicated in the previously approved conceptual master plan, for the existing programs held at the church facility, which includes the Trinity Lutheran Christian education, outside community group meetings, and the Sonshine preschool. The overall square footage for the classrooms in the new education building would be comparable to what they currently have. The new building would include a lobby area that is not present in the existing modular buildings. Trinity Lutheran Church does not at this time have a plan to expand the preschool program. The preschool enrollment would remain at 99 students as it is currently licensed with the State of California.

The construction of a multipurpose room to the northwest of the existing sanctuary is to accommodate the church's youth program. This expansion would not result in an increase in the current seating capacity within the sanctuary.

The western parking lot off Golden Road would be expanded from the current 67 parking spaces to 102 parking spaces, increased by 33 spaces. The number of parking spaces in the eastern parking lot off Del Valle Parking would be reduced from the existing 44 parking spaces to 22 parking spaces to accommodate the education building and the play area of the preschool.

The existing on-site landscaping would be removed and replaced. A bio-swale would be constructed along Golden Road to meet the recent State of California C3 stormwater requirements.

The design of the new building appears to compliment the existing facility.

IV. DISCUSSION

This workshop is a process for the Planning Commission to provide direction and comment to both the applicant and staff. The Commission's direction on the queries listed in this report would be very helpful to staff.

Staff believes that the location of the education building is appropriate. The location is consistent with what was shown on the master site plan implementing its final expansion to the existing facilities and church functions. The proposed parking lot reconfiguration appears to help traffic flow in and out of the site during the various activities.

The proposed development was reviewed by the City Traffic Engineer. It was determined that a traffic study is not needed based on the following:

1. The enrollment of the existing preschool school program would remain the same.
2. The seating capacity within the sanctuary would remain the same.
3. The square footage of the classrooms in the proposed education building is comparable to the square footage of the modular buildings and the classroom in the existing church facility.
4. Both the preschool and church programs would remain the same.

Neighborhood Comments

First City Hosted Neighborhood Meeting: The Church held neighborhood meetings on November 10, 2005 and November 13, 2005. Though there was considerable outreach, due to the holidays, there was very little turnout or interest in the community to discuss the project. At that time, it appeared that there were no real neighborhood issues. As a result of discussing next steps, the City determined that it would host a neighborhood meeting which was held on site on July 31, 2006. Approximately 10 residents attended meeting.

Comments were focused on the location of the education building, the size of the education building, and the parking lot layout and parking space allocations. The residents requested the following revisions to the plans. Planning staff and representatives from Trinity Lutheran addressed these requests as indicated below, italicized:

1. To relocate the education building to where the current modular buildings are located;

Trinity Lutheran has indicated that they are hesitant to relocate the buildings to this location as it would essentially close Sonshine Preschool if this location is dictated.

2. To connect the two on-site parking lots.;

Staff has provided direction to the applicant that it was not desirable to link the two parking lots in that it would likely create a situation of cut-through traffic from Golden Road to Del Valle and vice versa. It would result in traffic bisecting the property and placing the children attending the preschool at greater risk.

3. To reduce the number of parking spaces that would be provided in the parking lot on Golden Road;

The applicant has indicated a desire to capture additional parking on the site so as not to be a poor neighbor in not providing enough. Although fewer spaces would meet the parking requirement of one space per six individuals, that ratio is not based on a current practice of shared driving. The additional spaces will encourage parking on site instead of on Golden Road and Del Valle Parkway.

4. To retain the current number parking spaces in the parking lot on Del Valle Parkway;

The number of spaces is being reduced based on the proposed location of the new education building.

The residents were concerned about additional traffic being brought to the neighborhood, due to the expansion of the western parking lot at Golden Road. The residents voiced the concern that all of the additional parking would encourage an increase in membership and preschool enrollment. They also asked the City to investigate the possibility of creating a left-turn pocket for traffic traveling east on Del Valle Parkway to get to the church's parking lot.

Second City Hosted Neighborhood Meeting: Following the neighbor meeting, staff met with the applicant and their architect. A revised site plan was presented to the neighbors at a second neighborhood meeting on September 6, 2006. The revised plan provided the following modifications:

1. The number of parking spaces in the western parking lot (Golden Road) is reduced from the proposed 102 parking spaces to 81 parking spaces.
2. A landscaping area is provided along the property line between Trinity Lutheran and the swim club.

Although modified, the residents on Golden Road are still concerned about the size of the parking lot and the number of parking spaces it would provide. They believe the expanded

parking lot would continue to attract additional vehicles to the site thus resulting in additional traffic on Golden Road. The residents questioned the location of the education building and the reasons for it not being relocated closer to where the existing modular buildings are located if not at the same location.

In addition, the following issues were discussed:

1. Parking lot lights;
2. The height of the proposed berm along Golden Road;
3. The proposed landscaping;
4. The possibility of increasing enrollment of the existing preschool program and using the education building as an expanded facility during congregation.

Some of the residents objected to any expansion of the existing facility. They expressed the concern that the proposed changes would actually increase membership thereby increasing traffic to the site, resulting in adversely impacting the neighborhood.

Directions Needed:

1. Site Plan and Expansion: The location of the education building is similar to what was shown on the master site plan included in the 1999 expansion proposal (UP-99-40). The master site plan shows a two-story building, approximately 13,000 square feet in size. The proposed building is a one-story building, approximately 8,100 square feet in size. It is by comparison lower in height and smaller in size. The applicant believes it is important to create a campus environment. The goal is to have the education building constructed near the sanctuary, thus, emphasizing the sanctuary building being the focal building of the site. Offsetting the building would diminish this purpose. Is the location of the education building appropriate?
2. Parking Lot Expansion: The number of parking spaces in both parking lots have been adjusted so as to provide a comparable amount of and a balanced parking between the two parking lots. This is an extension of the existing site design which was a part of the previous direction and approvals. Some of the residents indicated that they would rather have the church use street parking during congregation than providing additional on-site parking, while the others welcome the expansion of parking lot to create addition on-site spaces.

Should the western parking lot (Golden Road) be expanded to alleviate street parking during congregation?

3. Parking Lot Connection: The western (Golden Road) and eastern (Del Valle Parkway) parking lots are not connected. Each parking lot meets the Fire Department's requirements. The purpose of two separate parking lots is to prevent cut-through traffic, avoid liability, and ensure safety to the patrons and children of the preschool, to those outside the membership congregation who use the facility and the members themselves. Should the parking lots be connected?
4. Architectural Design: Is the architecture of the proposed development compatible and complimentary to the existing facility?

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

Public notices were sent to all property owners and tenants within a 1,000-foot radius of the subject property.

In addition to the emails attached to this report, Sandra Barsanti on Calle Enrique called, indicating no concerns.

VI. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Since the Planning Commission will take no formal action on the project at the workshop, no environmental document accompanies this workshop report.

VII. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission take public testimony, review the proposed project and provide directions to the applicant and staff.