



Planning Commission Staff Report

March 23, 2016
Item 5.b.

SUBJECT:	P16-0174
APPLICANT:	Graceway Church (GC)
PROPERTY OWNER:	Dave Schulze
PURPOSE:	Application for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to operate a religious facility within an existing building in Valley Business Park.
LOCATION:	1183 Quarry Lane
GENERAL PLAN:	General and Limited Industrial
ZONING:	PUD-I (Planned Unit Development - Industrial) District
EXHIBITS:	A. Draft Conditions of Approval B. Narrative/Project Plans dated "Received February 23, 2016" C. Location and Notification Map

BACKGROUND

The City approved a modification of the Valley Business Park Planned Unit Development (PUD) on February 24, 1984 to conditionally permit churches and similar religious facilities (Ordinance No. 1123). Valley Business Park is zoned PUD-I (Planned Unit Development-Industrial) District and contains a variety of industrial uses including manufacturing, office and assembly uses, and non-manufacturing uses including music schools, tutoring, daycare facilities, and other religious facilities.

Graceway Church (GC) currently operates at 3410 Cornerstone Court. Due to an approved residential project (Ponderosa's Centerpointe Project) set to commence construction at the church's current location, GC has entered into escrow to purchase the 27,362-square-foot building located at 1183 Quarry Lane, within the Valley Business Park, with the intent of relocating their existing religious assembly use to this location. This location was formerly occupied by a printing business. Consistent with the procedures set out in the PUD for the area, GC is requesting approval of a CUP to operate a religious facility within an approximately 15,632-square-foot portion of this building on the subject parcel. The remaining portion of the building would remain vacant and for lease. As stated above, churches and similar religious facilities are conditionally permitted within the PUD-I District with the approval of a CUP.

Accordingly, the CUP for this application is before the Planning Commission for review and action.

SITE AND AREA DESCRIPTION

The subject site is a flat and fully developed 1.79-acre parcel on the east side of Quarry Lane, south of Boulder Street within the Valley Business Park. There is one building (27,362 square feet) constructed on the subject parcel along with landscaping and 100 parking spaces. The subject parcel and building are accessible from two driveways off Quarry Lane. Figure 1 shows an aerial photograph of the subject parcel and building, and shows the site in the context of Valley Business Park. Valley Business Park includes a mix of uses such as: professional offices, light manufacturing and industrial uses, religious facilities, private schools, cheerleader training, and other sports and recreational facilities. The site is surrounded to the north by Quarry Lane School, and to the south, east and west by predominantly professional offices, light manufacturing and industrial uses.

Figure 1: Aerial Photograph



PROPOSED PROJECT

GC proposes to occupy an approximately 15,632-square-foot portion of the building on the subject parcel and has set 318 people as their planned maximum size for the congregation. The subject building will be used primarily for religious services and associated activities like bible study, but may also include special events such as weddings, holiday programs, and youth activities.

The table within Exhibit B summarizes the operational components of the church (including the proposed activities, days and times of use, anticipated number of attendees per activity, frequency, and the portion of the building, including square footage that would be utilized).

The primary activity would consist of weekly worship services, mainly on Sundays from 10:00 a.m. to approximately 11:00 a.m. Additional approximately one-hour-long Sunday services, plus a Saturday and midweek worship service, may be added in the future, as shown in project narrative (Exhibit B). There would also be weekly bible study, choir and band rehearsals, and support groups meeting on-site mostly on weekday evenings at approximately 6:00 p.m. or 7:00 p.m. Approximately two to four times per year, congregational or youth special events would occur on-site and would be held either on a Friday, Saturday or Sunday night beginning at 7:00 p.m. Staff office hours would be daily during the week from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Please see Exhibit B for more details.

Attendance for each of these activities is expected to range between six and 250 persons at any given time. Maximum occupancy would occur during Sunday worship services, which would be attended by up to 250 persons. No simultaneous activities would occur during Sunday worship services. Approximately five staff members would be on-site at any given time during normal office hours.

Interior tenant improvements to the subject building would occur and consist primarily of demolishing existing and/or rebuilding new demising walls and reconfiguring spaces to accommodate the intended activities and needs of the applicant as indicated in Exhibit B. The following exterior building changes are also proposed:

- On the south side of the building, a full height window will be changed to a single exit door;
- On the south side of the building, a single door opening will be changed to a double door opening; and
- On the east side of the building, a single door opening will be changed to a double door opening.

Please see the attached narrative and project plans (Exhibit B) for additional information on the proposed use.

ANALYSIS

Conditional uses are those uses which, by their nature, require special consideration so that they may be located properly with respect to the objectives of the Municipal Code and with respect to their effects on surrounding properties. In order to achieve these purposes, the Planning Commission is empowered to approve, conditionally approve, or deny applications for use permits.

Land Use

The subject site has a General Plan designation of General and Limited Industrial and is zoned Planned Unit Development – Industrial (PUD-I) District. The current PUD zoning for Valley Business Park permits uses such as offices, light manufacturing, and printing shops, and requires CUP approval for uses such as religious facilities, Heritage Schools, gymnasiums and

health clubs, indoor recreational and sports facilities, and schools/instructional businesses. Therefore, if the CUP were granted, the proposed religious facility would be consistent with the applicable land use regulations.

One of the primary concerns in reviewing a CUP application is the effect of a proposed use on surrounding uses. The buildings surrounding the subject building consist mainly of a private school, office, and light industrial uses. Other businesses in the vicinity primarily operate during regular business hours (generally 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., except Quarry Lane School which operates until 6:00 p.m.). The proposed use would be compatible with these businesses in that minimal activities would occur during normal business hours and peak use would occur when the other businesses are not open. Religious facilities have become a common use in and around business parks and they are typically regarded as “good neighbors.” The Planning Commission has previously approved other religious facilities within Valley Business Park, such as the Tri-Valley Chinese Bible Church at 1035 Serpentine Lane and the Islamic Center of Zahra at 1059 Serpentine Lane, and staff is not aware of any problems related to these facilities. Therefore, if the CUP were granted, the GC proposal would be consistent with the surrounding uses.

Should future problems arise with GC, the City would have the ability to revisit application with the Planning Commission for mitigation, or possible permit revocation, if necessary. Based on past experience with similar uses, staff believes that GC is a compatible use for this area and the current mix of tenants. In addition, staff has included conditions of approval that will ensure that GC would not generate noise, traffic, or parking shortages such that surrounding uses would be adversely affected. Therefore, from a land use perspective, staff finds the GC application to be appropriate for the subject property, as conditioned.

Noise

The subject parcel and building are in an industrial area, and therefore a certain amount of noise is expected. For industrial properties, such as the subject parcel, the Pleasanton Municipal Code states, “*No person shall produce or allow to be produced by any machine, animal, device, or combination of the same, on industrial property, a noise level in excess of 75 dBA [A-weighted decibels] at any point outside of the property plane.*”

The Pleasanton Municipal Code also states that a proposed conditional use must be in accordance with the objectives of the Zoning Ordinance. One of those objectives is to “Promote the stability of existing land uses that conform with the General Plan and to protect them from inharmonious influences and harmful intrusions.”

All proposed GC activities will occur inside the subject building and any noise generated from these activities will be consistent with or less than other activities in the industrial area. Furthermore, the subject building does not contain any operable windows, which will further reduce noise impacts on the surrounding area and should protect GC from other noise in the area.

However, to further minimize any noise impacts, staff is recommending the following conditions of approval:

- All doors must remain closed at all times during activities and/or business hours; and
- GC must inform their members to not loiter outside of the building and to be courteous and quiet when entering or leaving the parking area during early morning/late night hours.

With the inclusion of the recommended conditions above, staff has determined it is unlikely that the noise produced by GC will be in excess of 75 dBA at any point outside of the property plane as prescribed by the Municipal Code. Therefore, staff does not believe that the proposed use would be disruptive to existing or future neighboring businesses/tenants. Similarly, the surrounding land uses would not expose occupants of the church to disruptive or unacceptable noise levels.

In summary, the existing GC facility has been operating in its current location without any apparent adverse impacts on the surrounding area as no complaints have been reported to the City. Staff has included a standard condition of approval on the project that allows the City to review the project again to add mitigating conditions should any future complaints regarding noise levels occur. Such conditions could include modifying the hours of operation, reducing the number of people allowed in the building and requiring soundproofing of the subject building.

Parking

The subject parcel was originally built with a 100-space parking lot. While a portion of the parking lot is currently occupied by storage containers and fencing, those structures must be removed prior to occupancy as required by the recommended conditions of approval, ensuring all 100 parking spaces will be available for use by the applicant. The parking ratio for the subject parcel is currently one space per 274 square feet of floor area. There are no records of any City-approved parking allocation agreements; therefore, all on-site parking would be shared among all building tenants on the subject parcel.

The Municipal Code requires churches to provide one space for each six fixed seats or one space for each 60 square feet of floor area useable for seating in all facilities in which simultaneous use is proposed. While 250 persons maximum is provided within the project narrative (Exhibit B), actual fixed seating is not proposed on the floor plan, so parking is analyzed based on square footage of the simultaneous uses.

Table 2 below summarizes the peak parking demand of proposed activities for both weekdays and weekends, times of use, anticipated section of the building/square footage that would be utilized and the required number of parking spaces based on the Municipal Code requirements above:

Table 2: Anticipated Parking Demand

Activity	Day(s)	Time of Use	# of People	Section/ Maximum square feet utilized	Required Parking (1space/ 60 sq. ft.)
Worship Service	Sunday	10:00AM	Average: 150-200 Future Max: 250	Sanctuary 3,963SF NOTE: for Sanctuary SF, approximately 420 SF = foyer and 543 SF = stage. Seating area is 3,000 SF	3,000 SF = 50
Club 56	Friday	7:00PM	Avg: 15 Future: 30	Classroom 325 SF or Multi Use Room 2,087 SF	Students dropped off. Parking for leaders: 5-7
Youth Special Event	Friday or Saturday Night	7:00PM	Avg: 40 Future:80	Youth 1,008 SF or Multi Use Room 2,087 SF	Students dropped off. Parking for leaders and students who drive themselves: 30-40

The applicant is not proposing, and this application does not support, any simultaneous uses within the building. Therefore, the maximum number of parking spaces required by the Code for GC at any one time would be 50 spaces, leaving a minimum of 50 spaces for a future tenant. .

Staff notes that the Municipal Code’s one parking space per 60 square feet of floor area usable for seating requirement is a fairly optimistic assumption (in this case, it translates to five people per vehicle). Therefore, staff requested that the applicant estimate GC’s parking demand based on existing operations. GC indicated that at the peak time (worship service), they expect approximately 50 to 67 vehicles on-site, based on their average current attendance numbers for worship service (150 to 200 persons). These numbers yield an average of three people per vehicle, including children; however, in many instances, there are as many as four people per vehicle, which could reduce this range to 38 to 50 vehicles on-site at the peak time. If worship service attendance expands to the maximum of 250 persons as indicated in the table above, approximately 83 vehicles would be on-site, again assuming three people per vehicle; however, if four persons per vehicle is assumed, that number decreases to 63 vehicles on-site at the peak time.

Because the Sunday service would most likely occur when the other tenant sharing the building is not present, staff believes there would be adequate parking available on-site. However, to ensure that parking does not become an issue, staff has drafted a Condition of Approval that allows the Director of Community Development (CDD) to review and approve a shared parking agreement for any future tenant that comes forward as a permitted use. If a

CUP is required for a future tenant, then the project will be before the Planning Commission for review and parking can be carefully reviewed at that time.

FINDINGS

The Commission needs to make the following findings prior to the granting of a use permit:

A. That the proposed location of the conditional use is in accordance with the objectives of the zoning ordinance and the purpose of the district in which the site is located.

Some of the objectives of the zoning ordinance are to: foster a harmonious, convenient, workable relationship among land uses, protect existing land uses from inharmonious influences and harmful intrusions, and ensure that public and private lands ultimately are used for the purposes which are most appropriate and beneficial to the City as a whole. The subject building is located in Valley Business Park which has the characteristics of the City's I-P (Industrial Park) District. One purpose of the Industrial Park District is to provide locations for uses that can operate in close proximity to commercial and residential uses with minimum mutual adverse impact. As conditioned, staff believes the proposed GC is consistent with the zoning ordinance objectives and Industrial Park District purpose because it would provide religious services to the community and would be conducted so as to not impact or interfere with the surrounding uses. The proposed GC will be conducted indoors and on a property with adequate circulation and parking to support the use. The applicant will also be required to mitigate any future nuisances that may occur as a result of the proposed use. Therefore, staff recommends that the Commission make this finding.

B. That the proposed location of the conditional use and the conditions under which it would be operated or maintained will not be detrimental to the public health, safety, or welfare, or materially injurious to the properties or improvements in the vicinity.

Religious facilities are a common use within or near residential and commercial/industrial areas in Pleasanton. The City's past experience shows that these uses generally make "good neighbors" and are therefore not detrimental to public health, safety, or welfare, or materially injurious to the properties or improvements in the vicinity because religious facilities generally do not subject surrounding uses to heavy truck traffic, hazardous odors, or other objectionable influences. Further, if the recommended conditions of approval are met, staff believes the proposed use will not detrimentally impact surrounding uses because all streets around the site are designed per City standards to provide safe ingress and egress into and out of the site. In addition, staff believes the proposed use will have adequate off-street parking to meet project demand. Conditions have also been included that would require the applicant to mitigate any future nuisances as a result of the proposed use. Finally, the Valley Business Park Owners Association also reviewed the application and submitted a letter of support. Therefore, staff recommends that the Planning Commission make this

finding.

C. That the proposed conditional use will comply with each of the applicable provisions of the zoning ordinance.

The site's PUD-I zoning conditionally permits the establishment of religious facilities within existing buildings. In addition, the proposed use complies with all relevant sections of the zoning ordinance. Granting a CUP to the GC would be consistent with the City's ability to regulate zoning as listed in the Municipal Code Chapter 18.124. Therefore, staff recommends that the Planning Commission make this finding.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notices of this application were sent to surrounding property owners and tenants within a 1,000-foot radius of the site. At the time this report was published, staff had not received any public comments about the project. Staff has provided the location and noticing maps as Exhibit C for reference.

VALLEY BUSINESS PARK OWNERS ASSOCIATION

The Valley Business Park Owners' Association has reviewed the application for the proposed use and found that it is in substantial compliance with the Valley Business Park guidelines set forth in its Covenants, Codes & Restrictions (CC&Rs).

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

This project is categorically exempt (Section 15301, Existing Facilities) from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because the project involves minor tenant improvements within an existing office park. The vehicle trips to and from the site are largely consistent with the existing travel to and from the existing building and the project is consistent with the City's General Plan and Zoning. Therefore, no environmental document accompanies this report.

CONCLUSION

As proposed, staff believes that the GC will be compatible with the surrounding businesses and will not detrimentally affect the surrounding uses or residential properties. Conditions of approval have been included which will ensure that the safety and general welfare of the surrounding area, and the City in general, is maintained. Staff believes that the facility will fulfill a community need and that the proposed location is appropriate.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission approve Case P16-0174 by taking the following actions:

- 1) Make the required CUP findings as listed in the staff report; and

- 2) Approve Case P16-0174, based on the required findings and subject to the conditions listed in Exhibit A.

Primary Author:

Eric Luchini, Associate Planner, 925-931-5612 or eluchini@cityofpleasantonca.gov

Reviewed/Approved By:

Steve Otto, Senior Planner

Adam Weinstein, Planning Manager