

**Department of Planning and community development**

**Directive Memorandum**

Date: February 27, 2017

To: Planning Commission

From: Josh Machen, AICP, Planning Manager

Gary R. Christensen, ACIP Director

Project: Madrona School

File Number: PLN18970B CUP and PLN18970B SPR

As prescribed in BIMC 2.16.040(D)(4)(C), in the case of a major site plan and design review application (reference doc A), the planning commission shall review the application prior to the final decision by the director. **The director shall determine the major issues and specific aspects of the project that the planning commission should review, and shall forward this review directive to the planning commission.** The planning commission shall review the application based on the **director’s review directive**, **the DRB recommendation**, and **the decision criteria,** consider the application at a **public meeting where public comments will be taken**, and forward its recommendation to the director in accordance with BIMC [2.16.030](http://www.codepublishing.com/WA/BainbridgeIsland/html/BainbridgeIsland02/BainbridgeIsland0216.html#2.16.030)(C-E).

**Project Description:**

Construction of a new K-8 private school to accommodate 200 students and 27 teachers and staff, which includes classrooms, offices, and a gymnasium/auditorium. Site improvements include 39+ parking spaces, play field, stormwater facilities and on-site septic system. An existing residence, barn and two sheds will be demolished (Reference Documents A & B)

**Major Issues and Other Specific Project Aspects to be Reviewed by the Planning Commission:**

1. **Neighborhood compatibility-**The proposal is for a private school to be developed within a R-1 zoning district, which is primarily single-family residential development. A conditional use permit is required for a private school and associated facilities and may only be allowed if through design or conditions it can be shown that the proposal is harmonious and compatible with the neighborhood character, physical characteristics, and quality of the development in the vicinity of the subject property.
2. **Traffic -** A school has distinctive traffic patterns and impacts. Although the subject property is located on an arterial road, traffic flow and circulation impacts were identified. Initially, a traffic analysis was conducted and a report was prepared and later an addendum was completed specifically addressing the intersection of Sportsman’s Club Road and Highway 305 (Reference Documents E and F). **The City’s Development Engineer has reviewed the traffic reports and has found that the school will not have a significant adverse impact on traffic requiring off-site improvements.**
3. **Parking -** Parking is a specific aspect of the project that the Planning Commission needs to review and approve. Any parking over the actual demand must be approved by the Planning Commission. The proposal has provided for 39 parking stalls and an additional 5 flex parking stalls that can be used outside of drop-off and pick-up times. The proposal also suggests using the play field for temporary overflow parking for events. **The proposed development will serve a maximum of 200 students and 27 staff. The required parking is 40 spaces. The proposed parking lot provides 39 dedicated spaces and an addition five load/unload spaces that will be available for long term parking outside of the pick-up/drop-off periods. The parking lot includes two handicapped-accessible parking space. Additionally, to accommodate all-school event parking, such as an open house, the school has identified overflow parking within the playfield and a possible shuttle service program from nearby neighborhood community lots, such as Rolling Bay Presbyterian Church or the Grange.**

**Design Review Board Recommendation:**

The Design Review Board (DRB) reviewed the application at two different meetings. On December 19, 2017, the DRB meet to review the pre-application phase and the Site Plan and Design Review process. The DRB review was two-fold: to review the proposal for consistency with the City’s multi-family and commercial/mixed use design guidelines); and, to make general site and building design recommendations.

1. Site Design. Create small parking clusters connected by vegetated landscaping and pedestrian walkways. Parking lots should be located behind or to the side of buildings. Pedestrian walkways should offer connections to adjoining properties. Exterior lighting should not exceed 14 feet in height and should incorporate shields. Trash containers should be shielded from view. **The development provides a buffer more than 25-feet wide from N. Madison Avenue, and the parking lot lies between the buffer and the buildings, which are set back over 185 feet from the right-of-way. Parking facilities are located in a manner that provides appropriate separation between vehicular traffic and the campus. The parking lot is comprised of grouped spaces which are separated by landscape areas.**

**Pedestrian walkways provide internal connection between the buildings and between the parking lot and the buildings. The development provides numerous outdoor spaces, including playgrounds, play fields and trails; while most are oriented behind the buildings to serve the student population, one courtyard features prominently in front of the buildings and is the terminus of the pedestrian walkway connection to Arrow Point Drive.**

**The proposed outdoor lighting must meet the design guidelines, and the project will be conditioned to demonstrate compliance with regulations at time of building permit application. Trash containers are located along the east side of the class room building and are screened from view.**

1. Building Design. Buildings should utilize elements such as massing, materials, windows, canopies, and pitched or terraced roof forms to create a visually distinct base and cap. Building materials and patterns should be varied to produce variations in texture. Building elevations shall be vertically and horizontally modulated to avoid massive scale. Facades facing public ways shall incorporate setbacks or articulation, and shall include features such as columns or recessed entries. Blank walls shall not be visible to public spaces. Building designs should respond to nearby buildings by using shared elements, materials or massing. Principal entrances should be visually prominent and incorporate elements such as setbacks, recesses, and porches. Rooftop mechanical equipment should be concealed by and integrated within the roof form. **The architect’s goal is to create a campus that exemplifies environmentally sensitive building practices and design. Buildings are oriented to capture natural light and provide views of the outdoors. Building materials include natural wood siding and large windows that let in natural light and views of the natural landscape. While many of the buildings are two-story, they use the natural topography to blend in to the site, and no blank walls are proposed. Covered walkways, porches and canopies afford protection from the elements. Rooftop mechanical equipment is proposed to be screened integrated in to the building form with similar building materials.**

**Public Comment:**

1. **Neighborhood/Zoning Compatibility:**

Several public comments were received regarding the scale of the proposed development and the structures are too large and non-compatible with the existing residential neighborhood character. The school does represent a distinct change from the single-family homes within the immediate vicinity. The property upon which the school is proposed is 4.79 acres in total which under current zoning could support up to five single-family residences each with an accessory dwelling unit and associated out buildings. Under the conditional use permit requirements, the allowed lot coverage (the area of the lot allowed to be covered by buildings) is limited to half the amount that would be allowed if single-family homes and accessory structures were proposed on this same site.

Multiple comments suggested that the zoning should not allow a use that is similar to a commercial development and questioned why private schools are allowed in a residential zone. The zoning for the subject property is R-1, Residential one unit per acre zone. However, within the R-1 zone allows schools (public or private) under the provisions of obtaining a conditional use permit. Washington State laws grant local jurisdictions (i.e., city) land use regulatory authority. The elected City Officials of Bainbridge Island have adopted zoning definitions for commercial and educational development and adopted zoning regulations as to where these uses may be allowed, or allowed through a conditional use permit. It is the applicant’s responsibility to demonstrate that the proposed use can meet all of the criteria of the conditional use permit.

1. **Traffic and vehicular trips:**

Several public comments expressed concern regarding the number of vehicular trips proposed to the subject property each day and the impact those trips may have on adjacent roadways and transportation systems. The school facility poses a significant increase in vehicular trips per day when compared to single-family homes. According to the submitted traffic study, the school at full capacity is expected to generate 720 daily trips, 360 in and 360 out. This is precisely why educational facilities that require a conditional use permit must be located on roads classified as residential suburban, collector, or arterial on the Bainbridge Island functional road classification map. N. Madison Avenue NE is listed as an arterial road on the classification map. Two traffic studies were performed to address the issue of traffic generation and the impact that the proposed development would have on surrounding roadways. Typically, traffic calculations look at the PM peak hour because that is the hour of highest congestion. The proposed development’s typical traffic patterns fall outside of this peak hour, so the school is likely to have little to no impacts on the PM peak hour. However, in consideration of public comments received a second traffic study was performed to analyze the morning peak hour and specifically the potential impact on the Sportsman’s Club/SR305 intersection. The traffic studies indicate that this intersection will fail in the year2040 with or without the proposed school. The City has generally accepted that these major intersection improvements that serve major portions of the island are a City and State responsibility and that individual project are not expected to make the improvements when their portion of the impact is very minimal.

1. **Noise from children:**

Only a couple of public comments expressed concern regarding noise emanating from children’s play. While many of the surrounding properties are developed with single-family homes, only one is in proximity to the playfield to be impacted by noise from children’s play. The closest house is approximately 75 feet away from the property line and as proposed the playfields would be over 100 feet from the residence and will have a new 15-foot landscape buffer and possible fence between the properties.

1. **Visual impact:**

A few public comments received expressed concern that the proposed school would have a negative visual impact on the surrounding residential neighborhood character. As proposed and required by the municipal code, the proposed project is providing a dense buffer of existing trees and shrubs along N. Madison Avenue. The closest parking spaces will be almost 45 feet back from the edge of right-of-way. Existing native tree and shrub buffer also exists along the north, east and half of the south property lines. Where no buffer exists along a portion of the south property line a new 15-foot full screen buffer will be planted as part of this proposed development. These buffers will help ensure the residential nature of area is not visually altered by the proposed private school.

1. **Lighting:**

Concerns were raised that the school may employ high intruding parking lot lighting or lighting for the play fields that would adversely impact surrounding properties. As part of their application the school was required to submit a lighting plan with proposed fixtures. As proposed, only a few low bollard lights are proposed around the parking area and pedestrian paths and there are some entry sconces proposed on the buildings. The proposed fixtures are all shielded and downlight only.

1. **Parking:**

Public comments were received regarding the adequacy of the number of parking spaces being provided, especially for large events involving the whole school. The proposed school is providing 39 parking stalls in addition to five load/unload spaces that would be available for long-term parking outside of pick-up/drop-off times. The number of stalls is consistent with the City’s regulations for schools including staff, parents and visitors. The school has recognized for large events alternative parking would be necessary. For these events, the school play field could be accessed and used for overflow parking in addition to shuttle programs from either Rolling Bay Presbyterian Church or from the Grange Hall parking lot.

1. **Signs:**

Concerns were raised that a large lighted sign at the entrance of the school on Madison could detract from the residential neighborhood character. A school sign, consistent with the municipal code and as specified in a conditional use permit, would be limited in size, and be required to meet lighting requirements, and to assure e compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood. Any sign not visible from the public right-of-way or adjacent property is not considered a regulated sign under the City’s regulations.

1. **No rental clause:**

A concern was raised that the school would rent out their space to commercial endeavors during non-school hours causing additional traffic and potential impacts on the surrounding properties. Often schools or other public facilities are rented out to other non-profit clubs or religious groups for use on off hours. No commercial businesses would be allowed to use the school facilities as this would be a violation of the municipal code. Other uses wanting to rent space from the school would have to demonstrate that their intended use would not adversely affect the neighborhood, cause a burden on parking or have any other impact greater than the school use.

**Major Site Plan and Design Review Decision Criteria to be Reviewed by the Planning Commission:**

* + 1. The locations of the buildings and structures, open spaces, landscaping, pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular circulation systems are adequate, safe, efficient and in conformance with the Non-Motorized Transportation Plan. **The City Engineer finds that with conditions, the project will provide adequate circulation systems and is consistent with the Non-Motorized Transportation Plan. (Reference Document G)**
    2. The site plan and design is consistent with applicable design guidelines. **The Design Review Board recommends approval of the project as proposed.**
    3. The site plan and design is in conformance with the comprehensive plan and other applicable adopted community plans. **The project provides for relocation of a not-for-profit educational facility which includes an arts education program and fosters appreciation of the natural environment.**
    4. The site plan and design has been prepared consistent with the purpose of the site design review process and open space goals;

**Purpose.** The purpose of site design review is to establish a comprehensive site plan and design review process that ensures compliance with the adopted plans, policies, and ordinances of the city. The overall goal of this chapter is to minimize land alteration, provide greater site development flexibility and consequently provide more creative and imaginative design than generally is possible under conventional zoning regulations. It is further intended to provide for the review of development proposals with respect to overall site design and to provide a means for guiding development in a logical, safe, attractive, and expedient manner, while also allowing property to be developed in phases. An additional purpose is to promote those specific purposes for each zoning district stated in Chapter [18.06](http://www.codepublishing.com/WA/BainbridgeIsland/html/BainbridgeIsland18/BainbridgeIsland1806.html#18.06) BIMC. R-1 District.

**Conditional Use Permit** **Decision Criteria to be Reviewed by the Planning Commission**

* + - 1. The conditional use is harmonious and compatible in design, character and appearance with the intended character and quality of development in the vicinity of the subject property and with the physical characteristics of the subject property.   
         **The school is located on a 4.79-acre property that is adjacent to N. Madison Avenue, a secondary arterial road. The proposed buildings are one and two-story buildings that conform to the natural topography of the land and are designed to complement the natural setting.**
      2. The conditional use will not be materially detrimental to uses or property in the immediate vicinity of the subject property.  
         **The proposed school is providing significant setbacks, landscape screening and fencing to ensure the development will not be materially detrimental to uses or property in the immediate vicinity. The stormwater system has been designed by a professional engineer and requires monitoring to ensure that water leaving the site is not increased due to the development.**
      3. The conditional use is in accord with the Comprehensive Plan and other applicable adopted community plans, including the Non-Motorized Transportation Plan.  
         **The development is in accord with economic and cultural goals contained in the Comprehensive Plan. The Madrona School provides a diverse Waldorf educational experience that is not available elsewhere on the Island.**
      4. All necessary measures have been taken to eliminate or reduce to the greatest extent possible the impacts that the proposed use may have on the immediate vicinity of the subject property.   
         **The project will be conditioned to take special care to protect and retain trees and vegetation within buffers. The school has agreed to a carpooling/rideshare program to limit traffic and to staggered start times to ensure that traffic along N. Madison Avenue is not adversely affected during drop-off and pick-up times. The school has also indicated that they plan on providing a shuttle plan for alternative parking for large school events. Off-site parking and shuttle could occur from the Rolling Bay Presbyterian Church or the Grange (Reference Document H)**
      5. A conditional use may be approved with conditions. If no reasonable conditions can be imposed that ensure the application meets the decision criteria of this chapter, then the application shall be denied.
      6. Additional Decision Criteria for Institutions in Residential Zones:
    1. All sites must front on roads classified as residential suburban, collector or arterial on the Bainbridge Island functional road classification map. **The property fronts N. Madison Avenue NE classified as an arterial road, and therefore the site meets this requirement.**
    2. If the traffic study shows an impact on the level of service, those impacts have been mitigated as required by the City Engineer. **The City Engineer finds the traffic study shows an acceptable level of service impact with the conditional use and issued a certificate of concurrency.**
    3. If the application is located outside the Winslow Study Area, the project shall provide vegetated perimeter buffers in compliance with BIMC 18.15.010. **The site is outside the Winslow Study Area. As provided in BIMC 18.15.010, buffer averaging is utilized to reduce the buffers to the minimum allowed width of 15 feet, while increasing the buffer in the areas that have existing mature trees and shrubs.**
    4. The proposal meets the Commercial / Mixed Use Design Guidelines. **Compliance with the Commercial / Mixed Use guidelines, is discussed above under the Design Review Board Recommendation section. The Design Review Board unanimously recommends approval of the project.**
    5. The scale of proposed construction including bulk and height and architectural design features is compatible with the immediately surrounding area. **The buildings are single story and incorporate various materials designed to be compatible with the natural setting.**
    6. If the facility will have attendees and employees numbering fewer than 50 or an assembly seating area of less than 50, the Director may waive any or all of the additional decision criteria requirements for institutions in residential zones. **This criterion is not applicable, as there are more than 50 students and staff.**
    7. Lot coverage does not exceed 50 percent of the allowable lot coverage in the zone in which the institution is located. **Maximum lot coverage in the R-1 zoning district is 15 percent; institutions including religious facilities may not exceed 50 percent of the allowable lot coverage (i.e. 7.5 percent). Lot coverage is approximately 16,260 square feet, or 7.4 percent of the lot area, and therefore meets this requirement.**

**Reference Documents:**

*(note all reference material may be accessed via the City’s Website Online Permit Portal-Smartgov or by clicking on the Hyper-links below)*

[**Madrona School Site Plan Review**](https://ci-bainbridgeisland-wa.smartgovcommunity.com/PermittingPublic/PermitDetailPublic/Index/8306e14e-4d3e-4490-a3e5-a6430128ec87?_conv=1)

**(The following reference documents can be found under the “submittals” and “notes” sections under this file number:** [PLN18970B SPR](https://ci-bainbridgeisland-wa.smartgovcommunity.com/PermittingPublic/PermitDetailPublic/Index/ed08a39b-13df-4d7e-b9dd-a656010b45d1?_conv=1)**)**

1. 18970B SPR MADRONA SCHOOL APP
2. 18970 CUP set (Drawings)

[**Madrona**](https://ci-bainbridgeisland-wa.smartgovcommunity.com/PermittingPublic/PermitDetailPublic/Index/c4ddd0e1-2564-454f-89a1-a643012ffa6d?_conv=1) **School Conditional Use Permit**

**(The following reference materials can be found under the “submittals” and “notes” sections under this file number:** [PLN18970B C UP](https://ci-bainbridgeisland-wa.smartgovcommunity.com/PermittingPublic/PermitDetailPublic/Index/5a64faed-f824-4a29-bced-a65601083d19?_conv=1) **)**

1. 18970B CUP MADRONA SCHOOL APP
2. 18970 Traffic Impact Analysis
3. [18970B CUP Traffic and parking mitigation plan](https://office.smartgovcommunity.com/Blob/777a045d-895a-4d7b-881e-4e6a1686f919)
4. 2017-01-24 Madrona School SR 305 Analysis
5. 18970 CUP-SPR DE COA
6. 18970B CUP Traffic and parking mitigation plan