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**Sent:** Friday, October 28, 2016 10:44 AM

**To:** Jane Rasely <jrasely@bainbridgewa.gov>; PCD <pcd@bainbridgewa.gov>

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**Subject:** Re: City of Bainbridge Island Notice of Application

October 28, 2016

Additional Comments on the Notice of Application for the Madrona School Conditional Use Permit at 11478 North Madison Avenue:

After more research, we are submitting the following additional comments by October 28th for formal consideration.

Additional information on comparables and precedent:

The Island School. K to 5th grade. Besides situating themselves across from Sage Manufacturing Company and next to Grace Church, they have easy access to Highway 305 for delivering staff, students, parents, and materials. They have an auditorium that seats 390, and may only rent the facility to island-based non-profit groups, including Cedars Unitarian Universalist Church. However, they have ample, easily accessible overflow parking at Sage and Grace for such purposes.

Hyla. 6-8 grade only. Has only approximately 80 students and is across from the American Legion Hall and a firehouse.

St Cecilia. K-8. Has approximately 100 students and is in a commercial area near Safeway and public schools, with access to parking at the Catholic Church.

So, at 160 students and 20 staff, and infant to 8th grade aged programs, the proposed Waldorf school will be the largest and busiest private school on the island, and the only one near that size that is not in, or adjacent to, a commercial area. It is actually three schools: infant/preschool, K to 5, and 6-8 combined. That's way too ambitious for our residential neighborhood. Also, we remember seeing a separate preschool building in the site plans, and yet the Notice of Application only mentions a new K-8 school in the Project Description.

Have the plans been changed, or is the Notice of Application inaccurate? If either the Subject Parcel Map (not enough area is marked in blue as pointed out in our previous comments on 10/27) or the Project Description is inaccurate, we believe the Notice of Application process needs to be started over.

There will be an elementary, middle, and preschool, but also parent-infant and parent-child classes charged by the hour. How do these activities fit into the parking/traffic equations? Additionally, grades 1-8 are charged at \$12,500 to \$14,500 per year for tuition and fees. Although they claim to give some financial aid to one third of their students, the school is not financially accessible to all who may want to attend. It is in no way a public school. Also, this business should not be considered a neighborhood school; in fact, according to their website, students are being driven in from Bremerton, Hansville, Indianola, Poulsbo, and Silverdale. It is actually a regional Waldorf school doing business on Bainbridge. Therefore, it should be restricted to a business/commercial area.

If this were a request, for example, for a basic two classroom Montessori preschool (without a 400 seat auditorium), with 40 students and 6 staff max, a 20 car parking lot, and a small playground, this would be a situation where we could start a conversation. We would still be concerned about traffic, parking, and after-hours activity, but it may be workable and still maintain our neighborhood integrity. But 160 students aged infant to 8th grade, and large playfields, and a 400 person auditorium, plopped down in the middle of a quiet, rural, residential neighborhood, is way too extreme to consider at all appropriate. After reading more about the school, we are even more convinced that this large private regional business does not belong in our neighborhood.

At the informational meeting in July, the principal stated that she wanted her school to be in a rural setting. Well, on that lot, and with a school of 160 students and 20 staff, and an auditorium that seats 400, she is actually damaging that which she seeks. She wants her workplace in a rural setting; well, we live our lives in this quiet rural setting. She, and the staff, and the children/parents get to go home at night, and we will be left with the daily repercussions of traffic and noise and deliveries, and even after-hours activity. How many of the school staff, or parents, or city council/building department personnel, who have purchased homes away from commercial areas, would welcome a large private regional business with nearly 200 employees and a 400 seat auditorium next door? Because that is what our community will experience, even though this business is called a school.

Respectfully submitted,  
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Sent: Thursday, October 27, 2016 3:01:53 PM  
Subject: Re: City of Bainbridge Island Notice of Application

October 27, 2016

This email is a comment on the Notice of Application for the Madrona School Conditional Use Permit at 11478 North Madison Avenue.

We have lived within 500 feet of the proposed development for over 30 years, and we are strongly opposed to this Conditional Use Permit. This strong opposition is not a judgment of the participants; a facility of that large size does not belong in our rural residential neighborhood. This is not a neighborhood public school; this is a private institution with the vast majority of students driven by private vehicle from outside our neighborhood.

Also, we want to be notified of EVERY meeting concerning this project where we are entitled to be present and/or make comments.

Before proceeding, we need to point out the misleading Vicinity Map provided on the Notice of Application. The Vicinity Map only highlights in blue that portion of the intended development that includes the existing buildings. This is only one quarter of the proposed development site. The original 5 acres that is intended for development has previously been divided into 4 rectangular lots. All four of these lots should be accented in blue, not just the one highlighted on the map provided. This is important because it then becomes more obvious the large extent of the proposed development, plus how close the intended development is to Windsong Loop and other neighbors.

Therefore, we question the validity of the mandatory notification process; if the entire 5 acres is being considered, and not just a quarter of the area currently called 11478 North Madison Avenue, were all of the neighborhood residents living within 500 feet of the entire 5 acres intended for development formally contacted as required?

Our rural residential neighborhood has historically been a quiet place to live and raise our children. There is a steady stream of bikers and walkers at all hours. We have a public school bus kiosk at the corner that has historically been a neighborhood meeting place, especially in the mornings and afternoons. We are almost a mile away from the Rolling Bay commercial area. In fact, over 30 years ago, when we were looking for a home, we found ones we liked better closer to Wilkes and Rolling Bay, but were concerned with all the noise and traffic near the existing public school, and the potential for future growth near the commercial center of Rolling Bay. We checked the zoning around our home before we bought it. This development will drastically alter our community, our collective lifestyle, and, since it is not a public school, will most likely adversely affect our property values.

Also, we had a licensed business out of our home for a number of years. Because we were considered a rural setting outside of an existing commercial area, we were severely restricted in the number of cars that could be parked at our home for business purposes. We complied with the law because we agreed with maintaining a rural residential quiet neighborhood. So, now we are expected to absorb a large private institution with the capacity for 160 students, the vast majority of whom are not from the neighborhood and will need to be driven in by private vehicles, and a 400 person capacity auditorium with a 39 car parking lot that is woefully inadequate for a 400 person building?

Our chief concerns are: traffic, parking, noise, and light pollution.

**TRAFFIC.** We have serious concerns about the results of the limited traffic study performed. During the morning, it already can take 3 traffic light cycles to pull onto 305 from Madison. Also, the building department has recently approved a large commercial development for Rolling Bay including a restaurant, shops, and condos. Have you considered how that traffic is going to impact Valley and North Madison before adding another huge stressor? Also, Windsong Loop is the only ingress and egress for over 20 homes onto Madison Avenue. The entrance to the school, on the plans we were shown at the community meeting in July, is very close to Windsong Loop. A few weeks ago, a transit bus pulled up, and a significant number of students got off to go to the proposed site. In that time, the traffic backed up almost to Valley, and I was unable to pull out. At the meeting in July, the principal informed us that the site was already being used for educational purposes, and that this has been going on for quite a while. Has this activity been previously permitted? Inspected for safety for the children? We were never informed that such activity was already being conducted on that property on an ongoing basis. At that meeting we were encouraged to think of the children. We are thinking of the children – it is just a different subset of children than the ones who may attend the private school. Our neighborhood children, who have historically attended Wilkes, Sakai, Woodward, and BHS have had a long tradition of using our local public school bus stop at Windsong. Since that corner is almost across the street from the proposed driveway for the private school, we wonder if the public schools will determine there is too much activity to have our bus stop there any longer, and will move it further down Madison.

Also, our kids have historically ridden their bikes and roamed around a neighborhood with very little traffic. That will most certainly change.

**PARKING.** 39 parking spaces for a 400 seat auditorium. Let's look at comparables: The Island School is probably the closest. They have situated themselves across from Sage Manufacturing Company, and down the lane from Grace Church. When they host large events, these facilities are used for overflow parking. Island School rents their facility out on Sundays to a church, which uses Sage as its parking. Hyla School is across from the American Legion Hall and a firehouse. I frequently drive by both of these schools, and see less pedestrians than along Madison and in our neighborhood. When I look at the proposed site, the only parking available beyond the 39 spaces they have planned would be in our neighborhood. In the past, when they have hosted large gatherings on the proposed site, the cars have blocked passage in and out of our neighborhood, and would certainly preclude a large fire truck from reaching our homes. We will have cars turning around and parking in our neighborhood all the time. We are a quiet rural residential neighborhood, far from any designated commercial area, and should not need to take on that noise, congestion, and danger for our children. This is also a massive building project: where will all the trucks and building contractors park? There will be huge construction disruptions over a number of years.

**NOISE.** There is going to be increased traffic noise, construction noise, crowd noise, and possible amplified sound/bells.

**LIGHT POLLUTION.** We have no overhead street lights currently in the area. Any additional lighting will impact the nighttime rural environment. For 30 years we have enjoyed watching the stars.

Therefore, the applicants are seeking a conditional use permit that essentially drastically changes the zoning. According to the current zoning, only three additional single family homes are allowed; the applicants are not entitled to have such a facility there, and are seeking a conditional use permit. We do not want it approved at all. If, however, you do approve such a large institution at that site, we believe the following conditions should be implemented:

1. Before any improvements are made on the site, signs will be posted at the entrance of Windsong Loop that basically say: No school parking in Windsong Loop neighborhood. The principal claimed we could call the office and she would take care of offenders. We do not want to repeatedly call the school office, and this will not help us if they rent out the site. We want offenders to receive tickets and even be towed, especially if they are potentially impeding fire trucks.

2. There needs to be a limit placed on the number of students. The current school is limited in size by their current facilities in the Eagle Harbor Church.

We believe the current number is closer to 100 than 160. We believe the proposed site should be capped closer to 100 students (or their current enrollment).

3. The facility and 400 seat auditorium may not be rented out or used by anyone other than the school. Because they have chosen to place their facility in a purely residential area (unlike the Island School), they may not rent out the facility to a church or for weddings or to theater/performance groups, or for evening meetings etc. If these uses are allowed, especially for a rental fee, you will essentially be functionally converting a rural residential lot into a commercial lot in the guise of a private non-profit. And we will never have a time of reliable peace and quiet during the week.

4. No weekend or evening use, even by the school, unless it is a small group activity only requiring 39 parking spaces.

5. No amplified sound, including bells, music, announcements, outside at all times. Only acoustic music is allowed outside.

6. No lighted playfields, and no use of playfields by any groups other than the school.

7. If the current school/owner vacates the property/facility for any reason, the conditional use permit is voided. Any other school or purpose would need to go through the conditional use permitting process again.

8. All construction vehicles, including workers' private vehicles, must be contained to the site during construction.

9. All school buildings and the parking lot should be hidden from view from Madison Avenue by a thick buffer of vegetation/trees.

This is a small community, and this is a large endeavor, so, of course, if anyone in the approval process has a close connection to the school, either through staff, students, or builders, we expect they will make that relationship publicly known.

Respectfully submitted,  
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Cc: "Josh Machen" <[jmachen@bainbridgewa.gov](mailto:jmachen@bainbridgewa.gov)>  
Sent: Friday, October 14, 2016 3:39:43 PM  
Subject: City of Bainbridge Island Notice of Application

Good Afternoon,

You are receiving this notice because you placed your name on an e-mail list to receive notifications about the Madrona School application for a City permit. Please see the attached Notice of Application for the Madrona School. If you have any questions or concerns, please e-mail the City at [pcd@bainbridgewa.gov](mailto:pcd@bainbridgewa.gov).

Thank you,

**Jane Rasely**

Administrative Specialist

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