

**Narrative
For
Council Use Permit**

1440 S. Clearview Ave., Mesa, Az 85209

Applicant:

Nathan Palmer

Owner:

Polaris RE Holdings, LLC

Introduction

The subject property is located on the Southwest corner of Hampton Ave. and Clearview Ave. The project consists of a 44,736 square foot gross. This submittal is only for parcel 218-56-570A.

A separate remodel permit is being sought for the interior re-design and construction of the building. No exterior modifications are proposed except to add a playground north of the existing office building along the Hampton Ave. right-of-way. The remodel is to intentionally design the space as a sensory friendly environment removing unwanted stimuli and promoting a positive learning environment for children on the spectrum. As part of that remodel, we are incorporating an indoor physical therapy environment at the north end of the building. This indoor space is intended to link to the adjacent outdoor proposed playground area so that it is a functional and transformative environment for the children. Therefore, it is critical the playground remain at the north end of the site.

Public K-12, charter, trade, and college schools are permitted on the site, however a private K-12 school requires issuance of a Council Use Permit.

Our intent is to use the remodeled office space as a private K-9 school for autistic and other neurodivergent and special needs children in the East valley which is planned to accommodate 100 students. Research provided by the Southwest Autism Research and Resource Center (SARRC) has shown over a 90% increased prevalence of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in elementary aged children over the last 10 years. We believe that the request for Council Use Permit is appropriate given the rising need for education resources amongst the autistic and neurodivergent population and is not a large deviation from the already approved public school use of the property.

Existing Site Conditions

Subject property is currently fully developed with a 10,129 square foot office building built in 1997 and being used currently for office administrative purposes. Hampton Ave. and Clearview Ave. are both fully improved with all dedications being granted for Right of Way at the site. There is an existing CMU wall at the South property boundary installed by a prior owner as well as a covered parking canopy. Both the CMU wall and covered parking canopy are proposed to be removed as they encroach upon an existing P.U.F.E. There is one existing driveway to the site from Clearview Ave. A secondary access from Hampton used to exist from the neighboring parcel to the West, however that access was abandoned as part of the redevelopment of the site. The North and East sides of the property have existing sidewalk, curb, gutter, and streetlights improvements. The development to the West is proposing to install a new wrought iron view fence between the parcels. Landscaping for the site will be maintained and repaired consistent with DR97-039.

Relationship to Surrounding Properties

The site is bordered to the South by a vacant parcel of land zoned LI that is owned by the applicant, and beyond that the US 60 Freeway. To the East, across Clearview Ave., is an industrial building project zoned LI. To the North across Hampton Ave. is an off-road vehicle sales business zoned LI. And to the West is a recently approved Multi-family apartment project currently under construction and zoned LC that also borders a large Target anchor retail center.

Existing General Plan Designation and Zoning Classification

The site is zoned Limited Commercial (LC) which is intended to provide indoor retail and service-oriented businesses that serve surrounding residential trade within a one to ten mile radius (Section 11-6-1(B) Mesa Zoning Ordinance). Public schools, including elementary, secondary education, charter, trade schools, colleges, and universities are approved uses in this zone. However, private schools require a Council Use Permit.

The subject property is in the Mixed Use Activity District character area with Community and Regional scale district sub-types under the current approved General Plan. This District is primarily intended for large scale retail commercial and shopping centers, but it also allows for other service uses supporting the surrounding consumer and residential make-up.

The surrounding properties are a combination of retail, industrial, office, and residential with supporting service, educational, therapeutic, and medical businesses intermixed. The proposed private school use is intended to directly serve the needs of the regional and local community and residential needs of a growing autistic and special needs population in Mesa.

Per the standards of review set forth on Page 15-1 of the Mesa General Plan:

1. This project is consistent with the Mixed Use Activity District and will further its intent;
2. The proposed school is consistent with the Regional and Community sub-types and supports the current and redeveloped neighborhood plans;
3. The project will meet all existing standards established for the Mixed Use Activity District and comply with all building and zoning requirements; and
4. The proposed school will strengthen the character of the area by providing a needed resource to local families and the community.

Description

This project proposal is intended to provide educational resources to a growing neurodivergent child population by creating a K-9 private autism school with planned enrollment of 100 students. The location is ideal for transit flexibility of parents in the East valley and provides additional educational opportunities for an underserved autistic population. The school schedule is intended to follow the Mesa Public schools academic calendar. General school hours will be from 8:30am-2:30pm Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday and 8:30am-12:30pm on Wednesday. The school will offer early drop off beginning 7am, and late pick-up up to 6pm. Parents will enter and exit through an existing 30' driveway from Clearview Ave. and form a

queue along the East side of the existing office building. Parking spaces are being abandoned at the north of the site to accommodate a vehicle turnaround to facilitate the queue for drop-off purposes. Parents will drop students off at the main school entrance at the Southeast corner of the existing office building. Vehicles will then exit through the existing 30' driveway on Clearview Ave. School employees will direct traffic during all pick-up and drop-off timeframes and parents will be assigned to groups with 10-15 minute intervals to avoid crowding during pick-up and drop-off. General drop-off will occur between 7am-8:30am, and pick-up will be from 2:30pm-6:30pm except for Wednesday which will be from 12:30pm-6:30pm. Third party transportation services will also be offered to parents for localized pick-up and drop-off. And parents may park at nearby public parking lots to the North and Northwest and use the existing crosswalk and pedestrian walkways as an additional resource.

Council Use Permit Review Criteria

Section 11-70-6(D) of the Mesa Zoning Ordinance provides guidance for review and approval of Council Use Permits. Each sub-criterion is addressed below:

1. Site must advance the goals and objectives of the General Plan and be consistent with the policies of the General Plan:
 - a. As described above, the private school use is consistent with the General Plan and furthers the policies therein.
2. The location, size, design, and operating characteristics of the proposed project must be consistent with the purpose of the districts where it is located (General Commercial, Neighborhood).
 - a. The project is consistent with the intent of the Mixed Use Activity district providing a service-oriented business to a large surrounding residential and enhancing a use needed to complement the existing commercial and retail areas.
 - b. The site location was already small in scope and supports the school size and amenities and suited to the surrounding demographic.
3. The proposed project should not be detrimental to the adjacent or surrounding properties or to the General Welfare of the City.
 - a. Schools general complement, not detract from, residential and other service areas. The proposed use will greatly support the under development multi-family project to our West as well as provide a complementary service not presently found in the larger Regional project design.
 - b. Additionally, we believe this building will provide an excellent resource for the City of Mesa which does not have many large private autistic school resources or facilities within City boundaries.
4. Adequate public services, facilities, and infrastructure must be available to serve the proposed project.
 - a. The property is already served by an existing 12" water main on the north boundary of the site and connects to the existing sewer line in Hampton Ave. SRP underground power services are already provided and an existing storm drain is located at the Southwest corner of the property.

Conclusion

The proposed project is consistent with the General Plan and is designed to support, be consistent with, and enhance surrounding properties and uses in the immediate vicinity. Further, we believe this will be an added community resource that will help to benefit an underserved population.