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August 1, 2023

Project Narrative
Case# DRB23-00267/BOA23-00269/ZON23-00376
St. Timothy Catholic School
New 2-story Multi-purpose Building and Classrooms
2520 S. Alma School Road
Mesa, AZ 85210

Introduction/Background

This narrative addresses Substantial Conformance Improvement Permit (SCIP) and a Special Use Permit (SUP) approval through the City of Mesa as requested. This site has been a church and school since the early 1980's and St. Timothy Roman Catholic School acquired the site and continues to operate as a school. The existing school campus provides kindergarten through the 8th grades and related support functions.

The site is located along the west side of Alma School Road, just north of Meseto Avenue. The existing lot area is approximately 90,733 sf or 2.08 acres. The existing underlying zoning classification is R1-6 w/Dobson Ranch PAD overlay. The adjacent existing church to the south and the school have symbiotic relationship in which they share access points from Alma School Road and Meseto Ave and parking.

Key Point 1
Without the shared agreements each parcel would be landlocked with only one point of access. This is a key point as it addresses parking capacity and site circulation.

Key Point 2
The maximum student capacity is 255 and will not change. The average enrollment has been 190 to 205 students (excluding Covid impact) and 2023/2024 enrollment are 179. The hours of operation are 7:30 am to 3:30 pm. Student drop-off time is 7:30 to 8:15 am and pick-up is 3:00 to 3:30pm. Drop-off and pick-up are staged on the north side of the campus at the shade canopy and staffed with 4 attendants to facilitate the process. Also note younger grades a let out at different times so the staging volume does not occur all at the same time. This operation will not change and has proven to work well for several years.

Proposed Project and Improvements

The existing school consists of 2 single story classroom buildings, 1-2 story classroom building and a multi-purpose building. The proposed new building replaces the existing multi-purpose building.

The proposed new building consists of a new 2-story classroom building with supporting school administrative offices and typical classroom functions. As stated, the new building replaces the existing multi-purpose building in a similar location and positioned along Alma School Rd.

The first floor of the new building consists of administrative offices, multi-purpose space, music room and media center. The 2nd floor consists of classrooms and specialty classrooms.

Key Point 3

The new building will allow separation of the older grades and provide specialty classrooms that they currently do not have on campus such as music, media center, life science and provides for a better educational experience. The new building does not alter school capacity but rather augment the school experience.

The new building will not impact any of the existing entry / exit driveways. New curbs, parking islands, and parking stripes will be provided to bring the property to substantial conformance. New landscaping will be provided along the frontage facing Alma School Road along with landscape improvements to the surrounding perimeter boundaries of the property. Other minor site improvements include new concrete walkway paths and points of connection to entries and exits to the new facility, and a new pedestrian street connection from Alma School to the property. All existing ADA parking stalls in front of the new facility will remain in their respective locations. The new 2-story multi-purpose building along with the existing buildings will not impact nor create any new parking demands.

The building design is reflective of similar architectural styles present in the existing buildings and campus. Façade treatments have been applied throughout the exterior of the building with relief patterns and openings that strengthen the style of architecture. The main material is integral masonry block and Exterior Insulating Finishing System (EIFS). All colors are complimentary to the adjacent surrounding buildings and complement the existing campus design.

SCIP Conformance

Our proposal includes bringing the entire site development up to substantial conformance and to comply where possible with the intent of the Site Development and MZO standards according to the following below:

Foundation Base – Sec. 11-33-5

The new construction building is following the intent to separate the building and outdoor seating areas from parking spaces and circulation drives, as well as providing a pleasant pedestrian entry to the building, as well as an attractive landscaped setting. New Construction complies with foundation base requirements of the MZO, see Table on the Site Plan sheet.

Maintenance of Existing Landscaping – Sec. 11-33-2.I

We have inventoried the existing landscaping. Any unhealthy plants / dead plants have been replaced. The planting count numbers have been updated to reflect what is required by the MZO. See Landscape Plan sheets, for more information.

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Pedestrian Connections – Sec. 11-6-5
A pedestrian walkway connection has been established from Alma School Road into the property connecting from the street to the new building. Additional pedestrian walkways have also been designed around the new building adjacent to other existing buildings on campus. See the Site Plan sheet for location.

Parking Lot Landscape Islands – Sec. 11-33-4
New parking lot landscape islands have been added to the site; complying with Section 11-33-4, where a new parking island is provided at every 8 consecutive parking spaces maximum. See Site Plan sheet for locations.

Perimeter Landscaping Adjacent to Residence District(s) – Sec. 11-33-3
All new construction meets the specified landscape area widths and plant ratios. Existing landscaping has been reviewed for impacts on the number of required parking spaces and storm-water retention basins, and the effectiveness of the screening. New landscape plantings have been provided around the perimeter of the site. See landscape sheets for more information.

Perimeter Screening Standards – Sec. 11-30-9
Perimeter parking screening exists on the site, a 6'-0" high masonry wall currently surrounds the property adjacent to residential, where parking stalls are located. Therefore, it is not necessary to install any additional screening methods per current site plan design. All existing ground-mounted units have been fully screened from view, and the intent is that any new ground-mounted units will also be fully screened by masonry walls. All roof-top equipment will also be fully screened from view using parapet walls and / or other screen wall elements.

Parking Lot Layout Standards – Sec. 11-33-4
Existing parking fields have been modified to new striping that are sized appropriately to 9'-0" x 18'-0" stalls per MZO. The parking stalls have also been re-spaced to better fit with the new landscape islands. Drive aisle dimensions have remained as 24'-0" wide aisles (two-way traffic) per MZO standards. See Site Plan Sheet SP as submitted for more detailed information about parking and associated compliance.

Parking Calculations:
Multi-purpose
1 / 75 sf (assembly) @ 2,700 sf
36 spaces Required
Parish Offices, Kindergarten through 8th grade)
1 / 600sf @ 26,240 sf (all campus buildings)
44 Spaces Required
36 + 44 = 80 Spaces Total Required
69 Space Provided on-site
(2) of which are ADA stalls

Parking Calculations Comparisons:
Existing parking with current angled spaces = 66 Spaces on-site
Revised parking with 90-degree angle parking = 69 Spaces Provided

Key Point 4

Total parking provided is 69 spaces and by utilizing 90-degree parking 3 additional spaces have been captured. Also note that the existing parking area was not in compliance with landscape islands. 5 landscape islands have been provided. By calculation 80 parking spaces are required, however based on logical parking demand the following would apply:

- Multipurpose/assembly space function during normal school hours does not contribute to the parking demand. Hence the 69 spaces provided on-site is sufficient for daily operations.
- The maximum number of staff that can be supported by the school is 25.
- Cross access agreements and shared parking exist with the adjacent south property.
- There is no demonstrated parking shortfall even with current operations and parking configurations. We have improved the parking conditions while complying with zoning standards to the extent possible through the SCIP process.

Building Separations – Article 2

Existing building separations have been maintained. The new construction building complies with present requirements of the IBC for separation distances between existing buildings and the new building.

Retention Basin Design – Sec. 11-33-6

Existing retention basins design have been maintained. A new underground storm retention system has been designed for this specific site; see Civil plan sheets.

Open Space Requirements – Sec. 11-5-5

Open space for existing development may be maintained at the current size. This section of the MZO doesn't apply to our current development, as there are no proposed multiple dwelling units.

Parking Lot Light Standards – Sec. 11-33-2.Q

Existing light poles have been maintained at their heights. New light poles have been added to the site to comply with current standards, see Photometrics Plan.

Perimeter Landscaping (all sides) – Sec. 11-33-3

Perimeter landscape setbacks are existing conditions and do not meet all aspects of the MZO. New enhanced landscape plantings have been designed along the perimeter boundaries of the site; see Landscape plan sheets for more information. New landscaping along Alma School Road frontage has also been designed. Even though we are not meeting the 'landscape yard' setbacks per the MZO criteria, we are still enhancing the surrounding perimeter areas by re-landscaping and providing new plantings

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where possible to meet the intent of the MZO standards. See Landscape plans for more detailed information and calculations.
See sheet SP1 for table summarizing the above information related to the site plan.

Special Use Permit (SUP)
A special use permit is deemed necessary to address the on-site parking and circulation. The narrative in general provides information addressing the parking and circulation conditions. Below are the key points that address the special use request and why it is important.

Key Point 1
Without the shared agreements each parcel would be landlocked with only one point of access. This is a key point as it addresses parking capacity and site circulation.

Key Point 2
The maximum student capacity is 255 and will not change. The average enrollment has been 190 to 205 students (excluding Covid impact) and 2023/2024 enrollment are 179. The hours of operation are 8 am to 3:30 pm. Student drop-off time is 8 to 8:15 am and pick-up is 3:15 to 3:30pm. Drop-off and pick-up are staged on the north side of the campus at the shade canopy and staffed with 4 attendants to facilitate the process. This operation will not change and has proven to work well for several years.

See **Parking Lot Layout Standards** – Sec. 11-33-4 above for parking calculations.

Key Point 4
Total parking provided is 69 spaces and by utilizing 90-degree parking 3 additional spaces have been captured. Also note that the existing parking area was not in compliance with landscape islands. 5 landscape islands have been provided. By calculation 80 parking spaces are required, however based on logical parking demand the following would apply:

- Multipurpose/assembly space function during normal school hours does not contribute to the parking demand. Hence the 69 spaces provided on-site is sufficient for daily operations.
- The maximum number of staff that can be supported by the school is 25.
- Cross access agreements and shared parking exist with the adjacent south property.
- There is no demonstrated parking shortfall even with current operations and parking configurations. We have improved the parking conditions while complying with zoning standards to the extent possible through the SCIP process.

As stated, on-site circulation and queuing exist and will continue to operate in the same way. The site plan has been improved by virtue of removing angled parking and providing the required drive aisle width. The Queuing space and circulation has been demonstrated and consistently provide safe entry/exit sequence and on-site operations.

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Key Point 5

- The maximum student capacity is 255 and has not changed.
- The new building will allow separation of the older grades and provide specialty classrooms that they currently do not have on campus. The new building does not alter school capacity but rather augment the school experience.
- The adjacent existing church to the south and the school have symbiotic relationship in which they share access points from Alma School Road and Meseto Ave and parking. See Key Point 1.
- Circulation and queuing occur in a clockwise fashion with entry from Meseto Ave and exit to Alma School Rd. Students are dropped/picked up at the same location. Parents do not exit the vehicle. Attendants secure the students 2 cars at a time.
- Queuing does stack behind parking spaces and cannot be avoided as this is an existing site condition. The queuing behind parking space is not problematic as parking is primarily for staff and queuing is temporary. Student drop-off time is 7:45 to 8:15 am and pick-up is 3:00 to 3:30pm.
- Approximate queuing calculations:
    - 45 seconds to load/unload
    - 2 cars per 45 second period
    - 30m x 60sec = 1800 seconds
    - 1800/45 x 2 = 80 cars serviced in 30 minutes

  The above does not account for more than 1 student per car nor does it account for staged deployment of students at the end of the school period. 30-minute interval is utilized as a reasonable expectation and the volume would decrease over the same time period.

Sincerely,

Vincent P. Di Bella

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