



Item No: 2  
Meeting Date. 5/22/2012

To: Planning Commission

Date: 5/15/2012

Submitted By:

Authorized By:

By:   
Lisa Ring, AICP, Senior Planner

  
Ronald MuneKawa, Chief of Planning

Phone: (650) 522-7213 Fax: 522-7201

Planning Division

Email: lring@cityofsanmateo.org

---

**Subject:** PA 11-086 St. Matthew's Episcopal School Expansion Pre Application  
16 Baldwin Avenue; 15 - 2nd Avenue; northeast corner parcel El Camino Real / 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Avenue (APN 032-313-010; 034-141-020; 032-313-070)

---

## RECOMMENDATION

That the Planning Commission review the proposed school project on a preliminary basis and provide input to the applicant and staff.

## SITE DESCRIPTION

The project site consists of several parcels that currently include the St. Matthew's Episcopal Church and Day School located at 16 Baldwin Avenue (2.07 acres); the Charles House building located at 15 Second Avenue (.43 acres) and an undeveloped parcel of land owned by Mills Hospital located at the northwest corner of S. El Camino Real and Second Avenue (.37 acres) (refer to Attachment 1).

The school is located on a portion of a block bounded by S. El Camino Real to the west, Baldwin Avenue to the north, San Mateo Drive to the east, and Second Avenue to the south. St. Matthew's Episcopal Church has been located at the site since 1865, and the School has been at the site since 1953. The School includes Preschool, Pre-K and Kindergarten enrollment of 50 children and a 1st grade through 8th grade population of 181, totaling 231 students. In addition there are approximately 41 staff, teachers and administrators. There are 37 parking spaces on the School's Baldwin Avenue site. The church, located near the center of the school site is not part of the project since its use is not expected to change during the span of the school's expansion. This main portion of the school includes the Classroom Building, the Nursery, and Julia Beylard Hall's (JBH) multipurpose and theatre space. These buildings, along with the Charles House, have been reviewed by the City's historic consultant and have been determined to an historic district in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards (refer to Attachment 7)

The school would add the Charles House to its facilities. The Charles House is located at 15 Second Avenue at the southern portion of the block at 2nd Avenue and 500 feet south of the St. Matthew's

main site on Baldwin Avenue. The Charles House was built as the church rectory in 1917 and continued in this function until 1956. It is currently operated by the church and does not have regular academic activities. It supports the church since it houses members of its staff. The existing Charles House is two stories in height with a partial basement and an attic. The building includes a kitchen, dining room, sitting room, chapel and two upstairs apartments.

There are three parking spaces on the property. In addition to the parking spaces is a large impervious concrete surface located behind the structure. This concrete surface acts as the staging area for Gatepath, a nonprofit gardening operation which is sponsored by Mills Hospital.

Adjacent and to the west of Charles House is an undeveloped 15,650 square foot parcel of land which is owned by Mills Hospital. This land, bound by Second Avenue, S. El Camino Real, San Mateo Creek and the Charles House is referred to as the "Corner Site". The site is included in the overall project as it is proposed to include outdoor activities for the school's preschool facility.

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

St. Matthew's Episcopal School proposes to construct a new classroom building known as St. Matthew's Hall on the Baldwin Avenue campus. This building would include classroom space and a below-grade gymnasium. The project also proposes to construct a new Early Childhood Learning Center (ECLC) at the rear of the existing Charles House building. The project also includes reconfiguration main parking area and landscaped entry court (refer to Attachments 2 and 3).

The school currently operates with one classroom each of 22 students per grade level. The school proposes to expand to add classrooms to offer two classrooms each per grade. With the new classroom space and the addition of Charles House to its facilities, the school would provide two sections of 16 to 18 students per grade level, accommodating up to 375 students in preschool through 8th grade, an increase of 144 students to the current School population.

The ECLC would be relocated from the existing school building known as the Nursery (on the campus' northeast corner at Baldwin Avenue) to Charles House. The ECLC would accommodate up to 45 students. The other 330 students would be located at the Baldwin Avenue main school site in the existing building known as the Classroom Building and the new classrooms to be developed at St. Matthew's Hall. There would be a gradual increase in enrollment between 2014 and 2019 that would stabilize at no more than 375 students in the year 2019. The applicant has prepared a project description which is included as Attachment 2.

The proposed project would be developed in three phases:

- Addition to the Charles House for the Early Childhood Learning Center and development of an outdoor play space at the Mills Corner Site.
- Removal of the Nursery Building and its replacement with a new 4th grade through 8th grade classroom building including a below grade gymnasium (St. Matthew's Hall). Phase II would also include the addition to and reconfiguration of the main parking area and landscaped entry court.
- Improvement of the Julia Beylard Hall's (JBH) multipurpose and theatre space and the addition of a rooftop play area.

### Main School Site

The school buildings, excluding the church, currently total 24,651 square feet. The project proposes to add 30,970 square feet for a total of 55,621 feet of school buildings. These additions would include replacement of the Nursery building with the new St. Matthew's Hall (classroom space and a below-grade gymnasium) and remodel of the existing JBH building.

The proposed new buildings would be designed in a more contemporary style as compared to the existing buildings, although elements of the existing buildings such as similar building height, rooflines, and the use of an arcade element would be incorporated into the new design (refer to Attachment 3, 4 and 5). See Historic Section below.

Access to the main school site is proposed from one entrance off of S. El Camino Real. There is an existing two-way driveway at this location, however, it is proposed to be moved to the south slightly. This driveway is proposed to provide access to the proposed reconfigured parking lot. The 39 parking spaces are intended to serve staff and parent visitors. This parking would also serve the church on Sundays. Currently, there are 30 parking spaces on-site that serve both the school during the weekdays and the congregation on Sundays.

The current student drop off/pick-up area on the main school site is located on Baldwin Avenue, closest to the existing Nursery school. There are six loading spaces in this area that are used throughout the day for drop off and pick up of students (8:00 am to 3:30 pm). The project proposes to increase the length of the drop-off/pick-up area to 11 cars to accommodate the increased enrollment on the main school site. This would require the management (limited parking hours) or elimination of existing on-street parking spaces along Baldwin Avenue. The project proposes to implement Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures to reduce vehicle trips generated by the proposed project. These measures may include the following: staggered drop-off; faculty arrive and leave at different times than drop-off period, or the use of a carpool program. These measures are further outlined in the Attachment 6. This Draft TDM report was prepared by the applicant's consultants. The City has initiated a peer review of this report (by the City's traffic consultant) to review the findings of this report and it will be completed in the coming months.

### Charles House

The project proposes to a 3,994 square foot building addition to the rear of the Charles House to accommodate the proposed ECLC. This building addition would be located at the rear of the existing building and would be one-story in height. Improvements to this site would also include the addition of 11 new parking spaces, driveway and play yard area. A portion of the parking and the entire play yard would be constructed on the vacant "corner parcel" adjacent to the Charles House site. The project also proposes a drop-off area on Second Avenue in front of the Charles House building. See Historic Section below.

## **CODE AND POLICY COMPLIANCE**

The General Plan designation for the site is Downtown Retail Core, however, the site is not in the required retail frontage area. The zoning classification is Commercial Business District (CBD). Schools are a permitted use in this district. The project will require approval of a Site Plan and

Architectural Review (SPAR) Planning Application which would be reviewed by the Planning Commission. The SPAR findings are included as Attachment 4.

Project Design Review: This project will require design review by the City's design review consultant. The review will focus on conformance with the City's Design Guidelines, as applicable. Given the historic nature of the site, the design will need to reflect the historic context of the site.

Environmental Review: Additional studies and analysis of traffic, circulation, noise, historic resources, biotic resources and other environmental topics will be completed to determine the project's potential impacts on the environment.

Green Building Requirements: The project proposes to meet the City's Green Building requirements for this type of building.

## ISSUES

### Historic Resources

As stated above, the project site buildings (St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, Julia Beylard Hall, and the Classroom Building) have been determined to be an Historic District in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and are therefore considered a significant resource under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Charles House has also been identified as an historic resource. The City's historic consultant has reviewed the preliminary plans contained in this report to determine the compliance of the design of the new buildings with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and has determined the following: "From our review of the conceptual design, ARG believes the designs for the projects, including work at the main church complex and the Charles House property, are progressing toward consistency with The Standards. We expect the final project will be consistent with The Standards and will therefore be mitigated to a less-than-significant level for the purposes of CEQA."

The project will continue to be refined in design and a final report will be prepared by the City's Historic consultant to determine the project's consistency with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards.

### Drop-off and Pick-Up/Circulation/Parking

The proposed drop-off and pick-up areas along Baldwin Avenue and Second Avenue will be evaluated as to their effectiveness and potential to impact circulation in the project area. The proposed TDM measures will be evaluated with regard to ease of implementation, monitoring and resulting reduction of vehicle trips. As stated above, the City has initiated a peer review of this report to review the findings of this report.

The project proposes a total 50 parking spaces to serve the main school site, the church and the proposed ECLC at the Charles House. The City's Zoning Code contains parking standards for private elementary and junior high school uses, which serve as a starting point for this project. This standard requires one parking space for each school employee. Additionally, the code requires adequate on-site access and loading for buses. The code also has parking standards for pre-school uses as follows: One parking space for each employee, plus designated spaces for loading and unloading children (1 space per 6 persons licensed at the facility). The project's conformance with these standards will be determined as

part of the traffic, TDM and parking study for the project. In addition, the parking study will determine the actual parking demand for the project given the school and church uses.

#### Tree Removal

The project will likely need to remove existing trees adjacent to the Charles House site in order to construct parking and a play yard for the ECLC. Any trees proposed to be removed will be evaluated and either replacement plantings or payment of in-lieu fees to the City's Tree Planting Fund will be required. In addition, measures will be outlined for the preservation of existing trees on the project site. A Site Development will be required to remove any heritage trees as part of the project (refer to Attachment 4).

#### San Mateo Creek

The ECLC proposed at the rear of the Charles House is adjacent to San Mateo Creek. The project will be evaluated for conformance with the City's policies regarding riparian setbacks as outlined in the Downtown Specific Plan (refer to Attachment 9) and the potential for the project to impact any habitat or resources associated with the creek.

### **NEIGHBORHOOD INPUT**

The applicant conducted a neighborhood meeting on May 14, 2012. A total of 12 people attended the meeting. Residents were generally supportive of the project, but had concerns regarding the drop-off/pick-up of students; traffic congestion in the area, particularly the intersection of S. El Camino Real and Baldwin Avenue and how circulation would be impacted in the project area with increased enrollment. The applicant also held preliminary neighborhood meetings regarding the project on January 10 and 15, 2012.

#### **PUBLIC OUTREACH/COMMENTS:**

Notice of this meeting was published in the Examiner newspaper 10 days before the meeting. In accordance with the City's Municipal Code noticing requirements, this hearing was noticed to the following parties ten days in advance:

- Property owners, residential tenants and business tenants within 1,000 feet of the project site; and,
- The City's "900 List" which contains nearly 100 Homeowner Associations, Neighborhood Associations, local utilities, media, and other organizations interested in citywide planning projects.

No comment letters have been submitted to the City regarding this project.

### **SUMMARY AND NEXT STEPS**

At this time, staff is seeking Planning Commission comments and input on the following issues:

- Architectural style, massing, architectural features, and building form. Relationship of new buildings given the historic nature of the site.
- Drop-off/Pick-Up Area, Driveways and Parking- Adequacy on-site circulation and parking, including the queuing and drop off areas for the school use.
- TDM Measures-Adequacy of proposed TDM measures to reduce vehicle trips.

Following this study session, the applicant will revise the plans as necessary to respond to comments from staff and the Planning Commission and submit a formal planning application.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Vicinity Map
2. Project Description
3. Reduced Project Plans
4. SPAR and Site Development Permit Findings for Approval
5. Data Form
6. Draft Circulation and Transportation Management Plan-Fehr and Peers, March, 2012
7. St. Matthew's Episcopal Church Historic Resource Evaluation, February 11, 2010
8. Architectural Resources Memo-April 27, 2012
9. Downtown Specific Plan Policies-San Mateo Creek

### **CC (AR and attachments)**

Joel Roos, Pacific Union Development  
Father Eric Hind, St. Matthews Episcopal Church  
Mark, McKee, St. Matthews Episcopal School

### **CC (Email Notification)**

Interested Parties and Neighborhood Meeting Attendees (If email address was provided)