

Chairwoman Diane Whitaker
City of San Mateo
Planning Commission
City Hall
San Mateo, CA

Dear Chairwoman Whitaker & Commissioners –

Thank you very much for the thoughtful and comprehensive consideration you have given the Saint Matthews application. Your input has been extremely vital, to say the least, to getting us to where we are today;

- A project that will create an improved existing condition for the students of Saint Matthew, all of those that benefit from it and for the community that surrounds it and;
- A project that is ready to be acted upon.

We are writing you in response to the questions you raised in Study Session #3 in reference to this application. Specifically, we are responding to the following items raised by the Planning Commission:

1. How will “Parking Plan 356” work?

Please see the attached Parking Memo from Parisi and Associates.

2. Please provide examples where similar parking programs for peak events have been successful.

Please see the attached Parking Memo from Parisi and Associates.

3. Would it be possible to reduce the number of heritage trees being removed while minimizing any decrease in parking?

Please see the attached plan, prepared by our Civil Engineer and Landscape Architect showing a plan that would minimize the number of trees removed while reducing the amount of parking by as few spaces as possible. This alternative would reduce the number of trees removed by 5 while decreasing the amount of parking by 14 parking spaces. The capacity of the north lot would fall from 58 stalls to 44 stalls. Heritage trees #42, 43, 44, 56 and 57 would be preserved. The accessible parking spaces would also have to be relocated from their locations on the previous plan. Saint Matthews is prepared to proceed under this plan or the one that was included in its application.

It should also be noted that tree #3 and #4 have already been removed, in consultation with City staff, due to weather related damage.

4. What is the viability of planting trees within the vegetated swales?

All of the tree species, selected for planting in the swales, are vigorous in nature and have a proven history of performing well within the seasonally changing conditions provided in a vegetated swale drainage system, as documented in the attached letter from Landscape Architect.

5. What type of landscaped screening will be planted along the wall which fronts El Camino?

The submitted plan, Sheet L 1.0, shows nine trees planted along the wall. Alternatively, Saint Matthews is also prepared to plant a non-deciduous perennial vine, instead of the trees, on the wall. Irrigation will be provided under either scenario.

6. Why wasn't a parking garage included in the Saint Matthews application?

The only location for a parking garage, of the required size (at least 100 spaces), on the Saint Matthews site is in the area of the existing playground. The possibility of increasing the amount of parking through the building of a parking garage, either above or below grade was discarded during the design process because of the following reasons;

- Environmental impacts – There were significant concerns that in accordance with CEQA a parking garage would create unmitigatable negative impacts in the areas of Aesthetics and Geology & Soils as well as possibly in the areas of Transportation & Circulation, Noise & Light and Land Use & Planning.
- Impact on the flow of traffic on the surrounding streets – Our traffic consultant and in conversations with parking garage designers informed us that the queuing required for a parking garage of this size and in the only possible location on the site, could cause a significant back up of cars on to Aragon Boulevard.
- Zoning related issues – The height, size and mass of the parking garage that would be required would not be in conformance with height and setback design standards for this zoning district.
- Impact on the students' current play area – The existing and currently proposed surface parking provides the required flexibility so that the area can also be used as part of the Physical Education curriculum and as a play area during recesses and lunch periods. The only possible location for a parking garage on the site would eliminate the flexibility of this area.
- Cost – A parking garage would need to have at least 100 parking spaces. Parking garage designers and builders have informed us that this would cost approximately \$50,000 per space to design and construct. This would add at least \$5 million to the project cost which would make the whole project neither viable nor feasible.

7. Can the hours that the auditorium and school gymnasium are open be tightened up at all?

Based on Planning Commission and community input, Saint Matthews is proposing to only allow use of the School Gymnasium until 9:30 pm instead of 10:00 pm and the Auditorium until 9:00 pm instead of no restrictions except as otherwise stated in the proposed Use Limitations, Sundays through Thursdays.

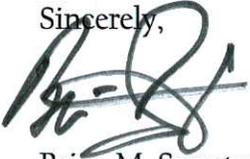
8. Are their alternatives to the off-site parking in the bank parking lot, at 885 South El Camino, across El Camino from Saint Matthews; if their lease on that property is terminated?

Yes, there are at least six possible alternatives including; 26, 44, 57, 94, 100 and 179 El Camino Real. Each of the parking lots, at these locations, has minimal usage in the evenings and on the weekends and have at least as many parking spaces as St. Matthews is currently leasing off-site in the bank parking lot at 885 South El Camino. These alternative locations are also well within the half mile radius put forth by the Planning Commission at the last Study Session.

Saint Matthews has also more prominently displayed on its website information pertaining to alternatives ways (ie; bike, carpool and bus etc..) to get to Saint Matthews, as suggested by the Planning Commission.

We hope this information is helpful. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brian M. Swartz', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Brian M. Swartz
Project Director