



**CHRIST EPISCOPAL SCHOOL (Applicant)  
New Addition(s)**

**COMBINED LEVEL 2 SITE PLAN, SPECIAL EXCEPTION MODIFICATION  
AND VARIANCE**

**PROJECT NARRATIVE AND STATEMENT OF JUSTIFICATION**

The Applicant, Christ Episcopal School (CES or School), proposes to construct a new addition on an undeveloped portion of its existing campus property located at 109 S. Washington Street. The property is also home to the historic Christ Episcopal Church and parish offices located at 107 and 109 S. Washington Street. The subject property, to be known as Lot 15, Block 2 of the Rockville Subdivision (pending approval of PLT2018-00572), consists of a total of 1.35 acres of land in the R-90 Zone. While the portion of the property on which the existing Church/School building and parish offices are located are also within an historic district overlay zone known as the South Washington Street Historic District, the vacant area on which construction of the new detached addition is proposed is not.

There is a related record plat application (PLT2018-00572) currently pending for review/approval by the Planning Commission that seeks to consolidate the land area on which the Church building and parish offices are located, along with an abandoned/released portion of former Church Street and the proposed site for the new school building (N442, N476, N477 and P496), all into one record lot. Approval of the lot

consolidation is necessary to negate the applicability of the additional standards for private educational institutions found in Section 25.15.02.g. of the Zoning Ordinance, and is a prerequisite to approval of the new detached addition as proposed herein.

**A. Background**

The Christ Episcopal School (CES) is a private co-educational institution that provides high academic standards with individual attention to the needs of students from pre-school to grade 8, in a caring, Christian environment. The average class size is 13 students in K-8<sup>th</sup> grade, with an average student to full-time teacher ratio of 7 to 1.

Each student attending CES undergoes a unique educational experience. The small class size and individual attention by the teacher foster the complete development of a student's academic potential. In an era when moral and spiritual values are avoided in most schools, CES focuses on giving each student the ethical standards and faith that are necessary for the proper maturation of the whole person, resulting in a student who is intellectually, morally and spiritually prepared for the opportunities and challenges of life.

In addition to its use of the Church building and another property further south on South Washington Street (i.e., 119½), the School currently occupies a portion of the 4-story office building located at 22 W. Jefferson Street ("Jefferson Building"). The Jefferson Building has a total of about 23,350 square feet of gross leasable area of which the School occupies about 12,000 square feet. The building was purchased by the School in 2004 at a time when there were plans in place to aggressively expand the School's student enrollment to as many as 397 students. In December 2004, the Board of Appeals approved the School's use of the Jefferson Building to accommodate those expansion goals in Case No. SPX2004-00347. Growing the student population to that size, however,

is no longer consistent with the School's current long-range Strategic Plan. Rather, CES has determined that a total student population (Pre-K through 8<sup>th</sup> grade) of 180 students constitutes the "right size" for the School to achieve its mission and maintain both financial viability and high academic standards in the long-term.

**B. Proposed Improvements to the Property**

The present application seeks approval to construct a new building on an undeveloped portion of the School's campus known as the Foley parcel (P496), which is located directly south of the existing Church building and that also fronts on South Washington Street. The proposal entails "removing" the private educational institution use from the Jefferson Building entirely and essentially consolidating the School's presence on South Washington in the new building. The School would continue to jointly use/occupy the existing Church building at 109 S. Washington as well as maintain use of 119½ S. Washington Street for the CES pre-school.

The new building would consist of three finished levels of classrooms and related school uses, totaling 13,760 square feet of gross floor area. However, due to a significant grade change on the property, only two levels will be visible from South Washington Street. The new structure has been intentionally designed to be residential in scale and consistent with the materials and architectural features of the existing Gothic-style Church building in order to achieve a cohesive presence along South Washington Street. Architectural drawings depicting the proposed building have been included with this Pre-Application submission.

In addition to the new building, a small stairway enclosure is proposed to be added onto the existing Church building's northern facade. The total additional enclosed floor

area that would result is 1,060 square feet, and is shown on the Detailed Site Development and Special Exception Modification Plan submitted herein.

**C. Compliance with Development Standards**

The development standards table on the Detailed Site Development and Special Exception Modification Plan submitted this development application specifies how the proposed project complies with the Zoning Ordinance (Section 25.10.05) requirements for the R-90 Zone as well as indicates where variances from certain of the standards are required:

<u>DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS (R-90 ZONE)<sup>1</sup></u>		
	<u>PERMITTED/REQUIRED</u>	<u>PROVIDED PER THIS PLAN</u>
MIN. LOT AREA:	9,000 SF	58,825 SF
MIN. WIDTH AT FRONT SETBACK LINE:	80 FT	294 FT
MIN. WIDTH AT FRONT LOT LINE:	25 FT	294 FT
MIN. FRONT SETBACK:	30 FT	15 FT (EXISTING PARISH HOUSE) <sup>2</sup> 0 FT (EXISTING CHURCH) <sup>2</sup> 30 FT (NEW BUILDING)
MIN. SIDE SETBACK <sup>3</sup> :	11 FT	11 FT
MIN. REAR SETBACK:	25 FT	35 FT
MAX. HEIGHT:	35 FT	35 FT (NEW BUILDING) <sup>6,14</sup>
MAX. LOT COVERAGE	25%	39% <sup>4</sup>
MAX. IMPERVIOUS SURFACE IN FRONT YARD:	30%	N/A
NUMBER OF VEHICLE PARKING SPACES:	96 <sup>5</sup>	10 <sup>8,9,10</sup>
NUMBER OF BICYCLE PARKING SPACES:	12 (SHORT TERM) <sup>12</sup> 6 (LONG TERM) <sup>12</sup>	12 6 <sup>15</sup>

<sup>1</sup>25.10.05.a  
<sup>2</sup>EXISTING CONDITION  
<sup>3</sup>WHERE LAND ABUTS  
<sup>4</sup>SUBJECT TO VARIANCE REQUEST. BUILDING COVERAGE CALCULATION REFLECTS CONDITION AFTER CONSOLIDATION OF PARCELS N442, N476, N477, AND P496. PROPOSED BUILDING COVERAGE ON PARCEL P496 ONLY IS 23% (INCLUDING 15 FT OF THE ABANDONED CHURCH STREET ROW)  
<sup>5</sup>SEE DETAILED PARKING CALCULATION BELOW PER 25.16.03.d  
<sup>6</sup>INFORMATION PROVIDED BY ARCHITECT  
<sup>7</sup>BASED ON TAX RECORDS  
<sup>8</sup>EXCLUDES 5 SPACES IN DROP-OFF/PICK-UP LANE  
<sup>9</sup>91 ADDITIONAL SPACES PROVIDED IN OFF-SITE PARKING FACILITY. 101 TOTAL SPACES PROVIDED INCLUDING 6 ACCESSIBLE PARKING SPACES.  
<sup>10</sup>22% PARKING WAIVER REQUESTED  
<sup>11</sup>6.16.03.h.6  
<sup>12</sup>PROPOSED SCHOOL CONTAINS 6 CLASSROOMS  
<sup>13</sup>INCLUDES 13,766 SF IN PROPOSED SCHOOL AND 8,287 SF WITHIN EXISTING CHURCH  
<sup>14</sup>PER 25.03.03.c.3, BUILDING HEIGHT IS MEASURED FROM THE STREET GRADE OPPOSITE THE MIDDLE OF THE FRONT OF THE BUILDING TO THE MEAN HEIGHT LEVEL BETWEEN THE EAVES AND GABLE PEAK.  
<sup>15</sup>LONG TERM BICYCLE PARKING SPACES TO BE PROVIDED WITHIN THE PROPOSED BUILDING

More specifically, approval of variances from certain of the R-90 Zone’s development standards are required to overcome the practical difficulties presented by the fact that the existing Church structures (both the Main Church building (setback 0 feet from front property line) and the Parish House (setback 15 feet from the front property line)) are not in compliance with the current R-90 Zone’s minimum front setback standard of 30 feet. In addition, due to the existing historic Church structures on the subject property, the proposed development exceeds the R-90’s maximum 25% lot coverage limitation, resulting in a total lot coverage calculation of 39% or 22,942 square feet – thus, requiring a variance to exceed the maximum by 14% or 8,236 square feet. Notably, although the new classroom structure on its own could have met a lot coverage of 23% if the project area consisted of only former Parcel P496 and the adjacent Church Street parcel, the resulting smaller land area would not have been able to comply with the minimum per pupil land area, lot frontage and setback requirements of Section 25.15.02.g.2.(c)i. of the Zoning Ordinance – and, as such, necessitated its consolidation with that of the existing Church structures.

A separate Variance Application has been submitted which requests approval of the specific variances from development standards needed in order to facilitate this project.

**D. Compliance with Off-Street Parking Requirements**

This Site Plan Amendment application complies with Zoning Ordinance Article 16 requirements for parking as follows:

In addition to 10 parking spaces located on the subject property, there are 91 existing parking spaces located on the 22 W. Jefferson property (i.e., “off-site”) that the School will continue to use/share with the office tenants/occupants of the Jefferson Building. (Note: A parking easement will be executed and recorded in Land Records that will convey the shared use obligations of the parking lot to any future owner of the property at 22 W. Jefferson.) A shared use analysis/table is

provided on the Detailed Site Development and Special Exception Modification Plan that details the various uses and their respective hours of peak use. Based on that analysis the total parking required is 129 spaces. Accordingly, with a combined total of 101 parking spaces being provided via on-site spaces and the shared parking facility with 22 W. Jefferson, a parking waiver of 22% (28 spaces) is requested pursuant to Section 25.16.03.g.4. of the Zoning Ordinance which allows the Board of Appeals to grant up to a 30% reduction “on a lot or parcel that contains a church... and an affiliated private institution.”

**E. Compliance with Required Findings**

While the proposed development introduces a new school building to the site, it nonetheless constitutes a significant reduction in the intensity of development, in particular in re the maximum student population that was previously approved for the Christ Episcopal School back in 2004, and retains access to the 22 W. Jefferson property for shared parking and circulation, mitigating its overall impact. Based on all the above and the accompanying application materials in support, the proposed development satisfies all the required findings for both Site Plan and Special Exception approval as required by the Zoning Ordinance as follows:

1. Section 25.07.01.a.3 – Site Plan Findings:
  - a. Does not adversely affect health or safety of persons residing or working in the neighborhood;
  - b. Is not in conflict with the Plan;
  - c. Will not overburden existing and programmed public facilities as provided in the adopted Adequate Public Facilities Standards;
  - d. Will not constitute a violation of any provision of this chapter or of other applicable law; and
  - e. Will not adversely affect the natural resources or environment of the City or surrounding areas.

2. Section 25.15.01.a.2.(b) – Special Exception Findings:
- a. Will not adversely affect health or safety of persons residing or working in the area;
  - b. Will not overburden existing and programmed public facilities as provided in Article 20 of Chapter 25 and as provided in the adopted Adequate Public Facilities Standards Manual;
  - c. Will not be detrimental to the use or development of adjacent properties or the neighborhood;
  - d. Will not change the character of the neighborhood in which the use is proposed considering services currently provided, population density, character, and number of similar uses; and
  - e. Will not constitute a nuisance because of noise, traffic, number of people, or type of physical activity.

Accordingly, based on all the above, we respectfully request approval of Christ Episcopal's development applications as proposed.

Respectfully submitted:

**MILLER, MILLER & CANBY**

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