

**TOWN OF SAN ANSELMO
PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT**

For the meeting August 18, 2014

Agenda Item D-4

Project Address:

921 Sir Francis Drake Boulevard
San Anselmo, CA 94960
APN-006-073-09

Case No.

UP-1404

Applicant

Amber Smith
821 San Anselmo Avenue
San Anselmo, CA 94960

Owner

Red Hill Church
921 Sir Francis Drake Boulevard
San Anselmo, CA 94960

Request

Use permit for a preschool for children ages 2-5 years old. The school will be open Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 5:30 PM. The project site is located in the R-3 Zoning District.

Recommendation

Conditional approval

I. PROJECT SUMMARY

Environmental Determination

Categorically Exempt: Section 15303(a) – New Construction or the Conversion of Small Structures.

Authority

San Anselmo Municipal Code; Article 13 – Use Permit

Timing

A determination must be made within 60 days of the project being deemed complete which is October 8, 2014.

II STAFF ANALYSIS

Project Description

The proposed project is to operate Le Petit Jardin French Immersion Preschool within the first level of the western wing of the Red Hill Church at 921 Sir Francis Drake Boulevard. Children will be both indoors and outdoors in a fenced and supervised area. Sections of the western wing are currently used by Golden Gate Tutoring Center for a summer camp and San Anselmo Recreation Department for basketball. Ms. Smith previously operated a private preschool for four years on Tamalpais Avenue in San Anselmo.

The preschool is expected to serve 30 children from the ages of 2 to 5 years old. The school will operate Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 5:30 PM. A maximum of seven employees and approximately 20-30 students daily are expected to be on-site.

There are no exterior changes proposed with the use permit application. The application has been reviewed by the Town's Public Works / Building Department and the Ross Valley Fire Department and both departments have provided the applicant with the requirements for occupancy.

Town Required Traffic Study

The applicant provided a traffic study (Attachment 2) to assess the impacts associated with the preschool and the application for a use permit for a tutoring center at the same location (Item D-3 previously considered on this agenda). The traffic report, prepared by Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., was prepared based on discussions with, and criteria set forth by, the Town of San Anselmo. The report addresses the traffic and transportation effects of the proposed projects to assist the project applicants and the Town in project planning and determining conditions of approval for the project.

Site Circulation

The traffic report included an analysis of the site circulation and parking for the two uses. The proposed circulation pattern will be to have all vehicles enter on the West Project Driveway (off of Sais Avenue) and exit on the North Project Driveway (directly onto Sir Francis Drake Boulevard). Due to the limited dimensions of the parking lot, and the angled parking spaces, traffic will flow in one direction, counter clockwise. An analysis of on-site queuing with the proposed project indicates that vehicles are not expected to queue up more than two vehicle lengths.

Based on the results of the traffic analysis and evaluation of the proposed site plan, the study identified that the intersection of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard and the North Project Driveway would exceed the Level of Service threshold for the northbound approach due to the additional trips created by both projects. To alleviate this issue, the report recommends that Sir Francis Drake Boulevard be restriped to include a Two Way Left Turn Lane (TWLTL) down the middle of the roadway between Bella Vista Avenue and Sais Avenue. This TWLTL will partially replace the existing left turn lane and therefore will not require any additional widening or restriping of the other lanes. The TWLTL will provide refuge for vehicles making the northbound left turn out of the project site. Vehicles can make the turn in two stages, yielding to the eastbound traffic on Sir Francis Drake Boulevard and then yield to the westbound traffic on Sir Francis Drake Boulevard, instead of waiting for an acceptable gap from both directions at the same time. As shown in Table 6 of the report, the TWLTL will improve operations at the intersection of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard and the North Project Driveway.

The traffic consultant and the Town also requested that the sign that prohibits right turns for east bound vehicles, between 7:00 AM and 9:00 AM, Monday through Friday, at the intersection of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard and Sais Avenue be removed. This request was reviewed by the Town Traffic Safety Committee and approved.

Parking

The existing project site has 27 designated parking spaces for Red Hill Church. There is one-way angled parking on the western portion of the parking lot, which limits vehicles from parking if they enter from the North Project Driveway. The proposed number of parking spaces will remain at 27 parking spaces, as shown in Figure 8 of the traffic report. The maximum parking demand is the highest in the PM peak. The preschool is anticipated to need 8 parking spaces and the tutoring center is anticipated to need 17 parking spaces, totaling 25 parking spaces combined. In many cases the parking demand is less than anticipated because the students will not park but will be dropped off and picked up at the front door. The tutoring center also anticipates that a portion of students will walk, bike, or take transit from Sir Francis Drake High School, and therefore not need to park a vehicle. The maximum parking demand of 25 parking spaces does not exceed the 27 parking spaces provided, and therefore it is not anticipated that there will be any parking issues. The proposed drop-off and pick-up procedure entails vehicles entering from the West Project Driveway off Sais Avenue and parking temporarily in one of the project's parking spaces.

Public Notice

A notice was sent to all residents and property owners within 300 feet of the project. The applicant provided many letters and emails of support from adjacent neighbors (Attachment 2).

III. REQUIRED FINDINGS

USE PERMIT FINDINGS FOR PROPOSED USE

In order to grant the use permit, the Planning Commission must make the following finding:

The establishment, maintenance, or operation of the use will not, under the circumstances of the particular case, be detrimental to the health, safety, peace, morals, comfort, and general welfare of persons residing or working in the neighborhood of the proposed use, or be detrimental or injurious to property or improvements in the neighborhood or to the general welfare of the Town.

The traffic study referenced above concludes that project access, internal site circulation, drop off and pickup and parking are all adequately designed and the project will not be detrimental to the health, safety and general welfare of persons residing or working in the neighborhood. The proposed use, hours of operations, client base and staff will not be detrimental or injurious to property or improvements in the neighborhood or to the general welfare of the Town. Similar uses are often considered accessory to churches and are a good use of church property during under-utilized times. Staff is able to make the required finding for the Use Permit to operate the proposed Le Petit Jardin French Immersion Preschool.

IV. CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

1. Planning Commission approval is based on the plans and materials titled Le Petit Jardin French Immersion Preschool, date stamped received by the San Anselmo Planning Department on July 23, 2014.
2. All conditions of approval shall be printed at the top of sheet 1 of the building permit drawings.

3. The sign that prohibits right turns for east bound vehicles, between 7:00 AM and 9:00 AM, Monday through Friday, at the intersection of Sir Francis Drake and Sais Avenue shall be removed by the Public Works Department.
4. Sir Francis Drake Boulevard shall be restriped to include a Two Way Left Turn Lane (TWLTL) down the middle of the roadway between Bella Vista Avenue and Sais Avenue. The design and construction management plan for the restriping project shall be reviewed and approved by the Public Works Department.
5. A building permit must be obtained prior to the start of any construction work that requires a permit per Town of San Anselmo regulations. Please contact the San Anselmo Building Department at 415-258-4616 or townofsananselmo.org/building for requirements and further information.
6. If a complete building permit application has not been submitted to the Town within one year from the date of final action, the planning action becomes null and void. However, this discretionary action may be renewed by the Planning Director for a maximum period of one (1) year provided the applicant places such a request in writing to the Planning Director and shows good cause prior to the expiration of the discretionary action.
7. Plans submitted for building permit must meet the Green Building requirements of the Town of San Anselmo.
8. The property owner shall indemnify and hold harmless the Town of San Anselmo and its officers and/or employees in the event of any legal action related to or arising from the granting of this approval and shall cooperate with the Town in the defense of any such action, and shall indemnify the Town for any award of damages and/or attorneys' fees and associated costs that may result.

Prepared By:

Phil Boyle
Senior Planner

Attachments:

1. Application and supplemental questionnaire
2. Examples of letters and emails of support
3. Traffic study
4. Floor plans

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