

SPECIAL USE PERMIT (SP2024XXXXX)

TO: Andy Reitelbach
Senior Planner II
Albemarle County Community Development

FROM: Kendra Moon, PE
Line and Grade Civil Engineering

DATE: February 19, 2024

RE: Tandem Friends School Increased Enrollment
Special Use Permit Application

PROJECT DETAILS

Applicant: Tandem Friends School | Michelle Schlesinger, CPA, CGMA
Consultant: Line and Grade Civil Engineering | Kendra G. Moon, PE
Name of Project: Tandem Friends School Increased Enrollment
Short Description: Increase allowable enrollment from 250 to 400 students
Proposed Site: 279 Tandem Lane, Charlottesville, VA 22902

PROPERTY DETAILS

Parcel ID Number: 09100-00-00-002A0
Short Parcel ID: 91-2A
Total Acres: 24.51 ac
Owner: The Tandem School
Current Tenant: Tandem Friends School
Magisterial District: Scottsville
Zoning: R1 Residential
Proffered: No, Conditions from SP201900007
Overlays: Entrance Corridor, Airport Impact Area, Managed Steep Slopes
Comprehensive Plan Area: Neighborhood 4
Comprehensive Plan Use: Neighborhood Density Residential
Land Use: Private school
Surrounding Uses: Monticello High School to the north; vacant residential land to the east and southeast; single family residential land owned by Albemarle County to the south and southwest; and Monticello Fire Rescue Station to the west.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Tandem Friends School would like to formally request an amendment to their existing Special Use Permit SP201900007 to increase allowable enrollment from 250 to 400 students at parcel 91-2A¹ in Albemarle County, Virginia. Increased enrollment capacity will give Tandem flexibility in their future planning and may help offset the County's growing need for grades 9-12 schooling facilities. Additionally, it will allow them to fully utilize their existing infrastructure as there is currently physical space available in classrooms that is limited by the allowable enrollment.

¹ Note that this document mostly refers to TMP 91-2A, as the development exists on this parcel only. However, it should be noted that Tandem also owns adjacent parcel TMP 91-8.

Site Mapping



Image 1 – Subject parcels, source: Albemarle County GIS 2018



Image 2 – Aerial image showing Tandem's campus, source: Google Earth

BACKGROUND

Tandem Friends School, established in 1970, is an independent school serving grades 5-12 in Albemarle County. According to their mission statement, Tandem “prepares young people for higher education and fulfilling lives of integrity, creative expression and service.” The school is located on an R1 residential parcel, for which a private school is allowable by special use permit only. Several special use permits have been obtained in the past, with the most recent increase in enrollment occurring in 2013, allowing up to 250 students.

PREVIOUS SPECIAL USE PERMITS

The following is a brief recap of special use permits obtained by Tandem Friends School. Those related to increased enrollment are underlined.

- SP197000077 – Original SP allowing school in this location
- SP199600006 – Expansion of facilities, student enrollment and staff limited to 177 persons
- SP199600025 – Increase of students and staff to 200 persons
- SP199600049 – Addition of 13,000 sf field house/gymnasium
- SP199700053 – Addition of 14,000 sf math/science building and increase of students and staff to 260 persons
- SP201300019 – Replacement of gymnasium and increase of student enrollment to 250 persons (note the change to limiting only student enrollment, not staff)
- SP201500021 – Addition of middle school (not built, initial site plan expired)
- SP201900007 – Addition of outdoor pavilion (completed)

Note that half of the previous special use permits obtained are related to increased enrollment.

PROPOSAL

Tandem Friends School is requesting an increase from 250 to 400 students, with the understanding that they will grow into the final enrollment number over a long period of time. Tandem currently has no plans for 400 students but foresees an immediate increase of approximately 15-30 students within the first two years of permit approval, based on past waiting lists. Their facilities have capacity for another 100 students, though they will need more staff and other resources first. In the future, if student enrollment approaches approximately 350 students, they will build a new school building for the additional students. A new facility will be in the approximate location as was approved with SP201500021 (see Appendix A). The aspirational enrollment number will enable the school to anticipate future demands and plan their growth accordingly without having to apply for a new special use permit every time their enrollment starts to approach the near-term limit.

CONSISTENCY WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The proposed expansion of Tandem Friends School in its current location is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. The subject parcel is designated as Neighborhood Density Residential (NDR) within the Southern & Western Neighborhoods Development Area Master Plan (refer to Appendix B and Image 3, below). Private schools are a secondary use identified in NDR, and Tandem is compatible with adjacent uses such as Monticello High School across the street and Monticello Fire Rescue Station immediately to the west. Additionally, the school is within Priority Area #1 in the Comprehensive Plan. Priority areas are places where future development is to be directed and investment in public improvements is programmed or recommended.

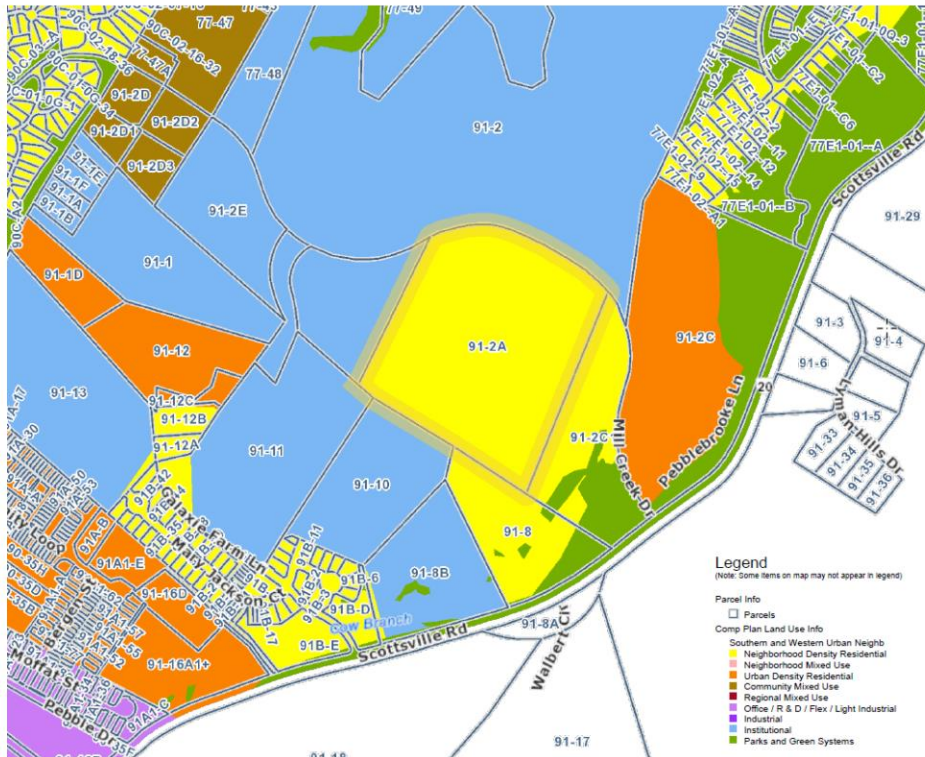


Image 3 - Comprehensive plan designation of subject property, source: Albemarle GIS

IMPACTS ON PUBLIC FACILITIES & PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE

Impacts on public facilities or surrounding properties are minimal because this is an existing use, and the infrastructure on the site is largely to remain the same with the increased enrollment – with the exception of a potential future school building. Potential impacts are evaluated in turn below.

IMPACT ON PUBLIC SAFETY FACILITIES, PARKS, AND SCHOOLS

There is little to no impact anticipated on public safety facilities and parks, aside from increased traffic, which will be discussed separately. Monticello Fire Rescue Station is located just to the west of this parcel, with quick access to the site. Any new buildings or roads will comply with all state and international fire codes, to be verified during the site plan process. There are no public parks off of Mill Creek Drive or in the immediate vicinity.

Increased enrollment at Tandem should result in a net positive impact on the public schools within Albemarle, as the high schools in particular are over capacity. Of the students currently enrolled at Tandem, approximately 50% live within Albemarle County and 22% are zoned for Monticello High School. According to 2023 Enrollment and Capacity Projections within Albemarle County Public Schools (see Appendix C), all public high schools are currently over capacity and are projected to continue this trend through the limits of the 10-year enrollment projection in 2033. Meanwhile, Tandem currently has facility capacity for approximately 100 more students, but is actively turning away students due to the enrollment limitations of their current special use permit. It is important to acknowledge that Tandem is a private school requiring tuition, which means it will never directly offset the need for public high school facilities, but allowing Tandem additional capacity means they will not have to turn away students who in turn may end up at Albemarle County Public Schools.

IMPACT ON PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION AND TRAFFIC

The most significant impact anticipated with increased enrollment is an increase in traffic, especially because the peak hours coincide with Monticello High School just across the road. Additionally, the County is planning a new elementary school on TMP 91-11, also located on Mill Creek Drive, around 2026. According to conversations with VDOT and County staff, there are currently no funding applications or planned improvements along Mill Creek Drive.

There are a couple of ways Tandem is already working to mitigate traffic impacts at their site. First, they split the cost with Monticello High School to pay for a police officer to manage traffic at the intersection of Tandem Lane and Independence Way with Mill Creek Drive in both the mornings and afternoons. Additionally, Tandem utilizes a second entrance on their property, southeast of the main entrance, to allow vehicles to exit the property in the afternoons during pick-up time².

An estimate of existing and total future traffic is included in the table below and in Appendix D. These estimates are based on very few data points available, so should be used as rough estimates only. An approximate 18% reduction³ in trips to the site can be assumed due to families with more than one student enrolled, and many students carpool, drive themselves, or are children of staff members, so traffic is likely less than shown. Regardless, it is in the school's best interest to reduce trips to the site and be mindful of how scheduling affects traffic patterns both through the site and on Mill Creek Drive.

Table 1. ITE Trip Generation data for existing and future enrollment

ITE TRIP GENERATION:

11TH EDITION TRIP GENERATION DATA				WEEKDAY TRAFFIC										
USE DESCRIPTION	ITE CODE	UNITS	QTY OF UNITS	VEHICLES PER DAY	AM PEAK HOUR GENERATOR ²				TOTAL TRIPS	PM PEAK HOUR GENERATOR ³				TOTAL TRIPS
					% IN	% OUT	IN	OUT		% IN	% OUT	IN	OUT	
EXISTING TRAFFIC														
Private School (K-12) ¹	532	students	250	620 ²	63%	37%	135	79	214	42%	58%	80	111	191
TOTAL FUTURE TRAFFIC														
Private School (K-12) ¹	532	students	400	992 ²	63%	37%	207	121	328	42%	58%	106	147	253

¹Tandem has students in grades 5-12 only, but this use description fit most closely

²Note there are only 2 data points for this use, so actual traffic data may vary

³Peak hour generator used instead of peak hour of adjacent street traffic due to existing high school in vicinity with similar peak hours

As shown in Table 1, the morning peak hours are the most traffic intensive⁴. As mentioned, the peak hours of traffic coincide with Monticello High School across the street, though the start times for Monticello High School and Tandem are 25 minutes apart Monday through Thursday (Friday, Tandem has a more staggered start, with cars arriving from 7:30-8:45 am). The difference in start times helps to spread out some of the morning traffic. In the future, if enrollment exceeds approximately 350 students, Tandem will consider options to stagger the start times of different grades in order to reduce impacts of traffic both on their internal roads and at the entrance to the site.

A right and left turn lane exist at both the Tandem Friends School entrance and Monticello High School Entrance. See Image 4 below for the entrance configuration. Should a site plan be submitted for a future building on campus, an analysis will be performed on the existing storage provided within the turn lanes to ensure they are adequate.

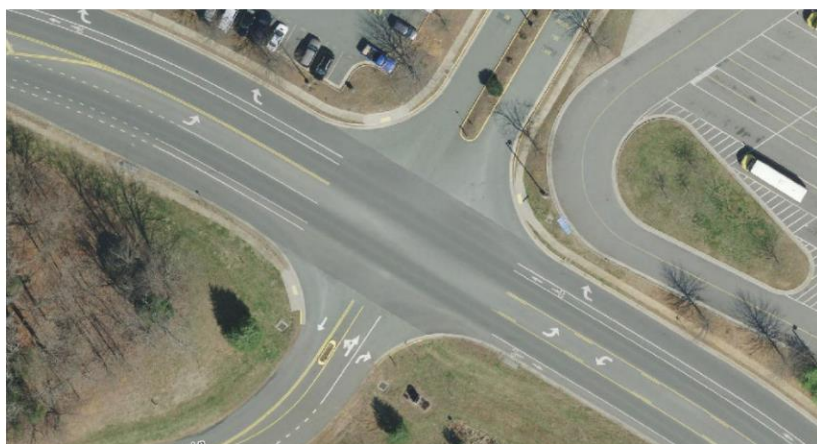


Image 4 - Tandem and Monticello High entrance configuration, source: Albemarle GIS

² Tandem currently blocks the use of this exit in the mornings, but they have the option to utilize it for morning traffic flow should the need arise.

³ In 2023-2024, the school's 250 students come from 206 families.

⁴ This is likely due to after-school activities, where some students remain at school until a later time. This is the case with Tandem, as they have a three-season sports program and drama production rehearsals year-round.

The operation of Tandem Friends School does not appear to be a safety issue at the intersection of Tandem Lane and Mill Creek Drive. According to VDOT Crash Data, retrieved February 2024, there is only one crash that appears to be related to Tandem's (or Monticello's) school traffic, and it is property damage only (see Image 5 below). The other crashes were either not during pick up or drop off times, were located outside of the intersection, or were alcohol related.



Image 5 - Annotated VDOT Crash Data Map

Tandem's increased enrollment is not predicted to impact public transportation negatively. There are no public bus routes in this area and presumably the demand for school buses at Monticello High School will decrease or at least remain the same if students in the Monticello High School district attend Tandem.

IMPACTS ON ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES

There is minimal impact on environmental features since the campus is existing and the increased enrollment can largely be accommodated with the existing buildings on site. Should a new building be needed, it would be constructed in the location approved with SP2015-21, which is largely in the location of existing turf and asphalt, with some tree removal required. A future building in this location will impact managed steep slopes, albeit a small area which will be removed completely (see Appendix E). Stormwater runoff from the new building will be captured and detained prior to leaving the site, in accordance with 9VAC25-870-66.

List of Appendices:

- Appendix A: SP201500021 Concept Plan
- Appendix B: Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map
- Appendix C: 2023 Enrollment and Capacity Projections within Albemarle County Public Schools
- Appendix D: ITE Trip Generation Table
- Appendix E: Steep Slopes Map

Appendix A
SP201500021 Concept Plan

Appendix B
Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map

Appendix C

2023 Enrollment and Capacity Projections within Albemarle County Public Schools

Enrollment and Capacity Projections (October 2023)

	PK-12 Capacity	PK Capacity ¹	K-12 Capacity ²	K-12 Enroll	PROJECTED ENROLLMENT (K-12 Students)										PROJECTED CAPACITY CONFLICTS										
					2023/24										2024/25 2025/26 2026/27 2027/28 2028/29 2029/30 2030/31 2031/32 2032/33 2033/34										
					2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	
ELEMENTARY	AGNOR-HURT	528	96	432	396	402	390	394	385	395	404	407	412	420	430	30	42	38	47	37	28	25	20	12	2
	BAKER-BUTLER	560	12	548	725	750	756	764	754	757	774	785	803	813	831	(202)	(208)	(216)	(206)	(209)	(226)	(237)	(255)	(265)	(283)
	BROADUS WOOD	330	18	312	268	261	269	272	274	270	267	268	271	272	272	51	43	40	38	42	45	44	41	40	40
	BROWNSVILLE	697	24	673	550	538	528	537	533	536	553	555	565	574	585	135	145	136	140	137	120	118	108	99	88
	CROZET	647	20	627	544	544	552	568	580	588	605	603	603	602	610	83	75	59	47	39	22	24	24	25	17
	GREER	527	60	467	456	457	442	429	418	419	428	432	439	444	454	10	25	38	49	48	39	35	28	23	13
	HOLLYMEAD	452	44	408	334	343	344	357	360	369	365	360	361	361	363	65	64	51	48	39	43	48	47	47	45
	IVY	400	-	400	347	355	361	360	343	352	347	345	348	349	353	45	39	40	57	48	53	55	52	51	47
	MOUNTAIN VIEW	604	48	556	713	729	742	768	767	767	783	796	810	822	838	(173)	(186)	(212)	(211)	(211)	(227)	(240)	(254)	(266)	(282)
	MURRAY	268	-	268	275	280	280	290	271	259	264	265	268	270	272	(12)	(12)	(22)	(3)	9	4	3	-	(2)	(4)
	RED HILL	198	18	180	176	182	178	183	182	175	176	175	177	178	180	(2)	2	(3)	(2)	5	4	5	3	2	-
	SCOTTSVILLE	270	18	252	194	192	190	191	194	186	192	190	190	189	190	60	62	61	58	66	60	62	62	63	62
	STONE ROBINSON	557	36	521	449	459	464	474	477	468	459	462	469	472	480	62	57	47	44	53	62	59	52	49	41
	STONY POINT	221	12	209	174	175	181	175	172	170	178	176	175	175	176	34	28	34	37	39	31	33	34	34	33
	WOODBROOK	510	-	510	523	522	514	502	493	476	496	502	512	521	531	(12)	(4)	8	17	34	14	8	(2)	(11)	(21)
SOUTHERN FEEDER ES (PLANNED 26/27)			500														500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	
NORTHERN FEEDER ES (PLANNED 29/30)			500																	500	500	500	500	500	
Subtotal	6,769	406	6,363	6,124	6,189	6,191	6,264	6,203	6,187	6,291	6,321	6,403	6,462	6,565	174	172	599	660	676	1,072	1,042	960	901	798	
MIDDLE	BURLEY			693	548	552	555	551	572	578	595	593	591	600	598	141	138	142	121	115	98	100	102	93	95
	HENLEY			910	799	837	873	894	904	909	912	902	899	931	912	73	37	16	6	1	(2)	8	11	(21)	(2)
	JOURNEY			699	605	626	648	684	694	709	669	652	618	636	632	73	51	15	5	(10)	30	47	81	63	67
	LAKESIDE			672	519	530	556	563	595	596	592	584	580	591	586	142	116	109	77	76	80	88	92	81	86
	WALTON			491	328	327	320	313	316	336	343	353	333	342	341	164	171	178	175	155	148	138	158	149	150
	Subtotal			3,465	2,799	2,872	2,952	3,005	3,081	3,128	3,111	3,084	3,021	3,100	3,069	593	513	460	384	337	354	381	444	365	396
HIGH	ALBEMARLE			1,654	1,956	1,932	1,882	1,857	1,810	1,854	1,904	1,964	2,024	2,018	2,035	(278)	(228)	(203)	(156)	(200)	(250)	(310)	(370)	(364)	(381)
	MONTICELLO			1,132	1,167	1,140	1,144	1,139	1,115	1,142	1,104	1,131	1,201	1,214	1,252	(8)	(12)	(7)	17	(10)	28	1	(69)	(82)	(120)
	WESTERN ALBEMARLE			1,122	1,132	1,151	1,130	1,096	1,134	1,159	1,145	1,219	1,210	1,188	1,247	(29)	(8)	26	(12)	(37)	(23)	(97)	(88)	(66)	(125)
	CENTER 1			120	81	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	CENTER 2 (PLANNED 26/27)			400														400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400
Subtotal			4,028	4,336	4,343	4,276	4,212	4,179	4,275	4,273	4,434	4,555	4,540	4,654	(315)	(248)	216	249	153	155	(6)	(127)	(112)	(226)	
COMMUNITY LAB SCHOOL			210	174	184	189	192	195	197	202	203	203	203	203	26	21	18	15	13	8	7	7	7	7	
POST HIGH			24	26	36	39	42	45	48	50	50	50	50	50	(12)	(15)	(18)	(21)	(24)	(26)	(26)	(26)	(26)	(26)	
TOTAL			14,090	13,459	13,624	13,647	13,715	13,703	13,835	13,927	14,092	14,232	14,355	14,541	466	443	1,275	1,287	1,155	1,563	1,398	1,258	1,135	949	

¹ Analysis assumes preschool enrollment is the same as capacity. Preschool programs may be attended by students who live out of the elementary school district.

² Subtotals and totals do not include planned capacities.

Appendix D
ITE Trip Generation Table

ITE TRIP GENERATION:

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Appendix E
Steep Slopes Map

Steep Slopes Map



Legend

(Note: Some items on map may not appear in legend)

- Parcel Info
 - Parcels
- Zoning Info
- Steep Slopes Overlay
 - Critical Slopes
 - Steep Slopes - Managed
 - Steep Slopes - Preserved



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