



ALBEMARLE COUNTY
PLANNING STAFF REPORT SUMMARY

Proposal: SP201900007 Tandem Friends School Pavilion	Staff: Andy Reitelbach, Senior Planner
Planning Commission Public Hearing: February 18, 2020	Board of Supervisors Hearing: April 15, 2020
Owner: The Tandem School	Applicant: The Tandem School, represented by Train Architects
Acreage: 24.508 acres	Special Use Permit for: Request to amend an existing special use permit for a private school in accordance with Section 13.2.2(5) of the Zoning ordinance.
TMP: 091000000002A0 Location: 279 Tandem Lane, Charlottesville, VA 22902	By-right use: R-1 Residential (1 unit/acre) which allows residential uses; private schools by special use permit. By special use permit, this facility may have up to 250 students.
Magisterial District: Scottsville	Conditions: Yes EC: Yes
Proposal: Request to amend existing special use permit SP201500021 to permit the construction of an approximately 4,500-square foot pavilion-type building for use as dining and meeting space at an existing private school campus on a 24.508-acre parcel. No increase in student enrollment is proposed.	Requested # of Dwelling Units: No dwelling units proposed.
DA (Development Area): Southern and Western Urban Neighborhoods Master Plan Area	Comp. Plan Designation: Neighborhood Density Residential – residential (3-6 units/acre); supporting uses such as places of worship, schools, public and institutional uses and small-scale neighborhood serving retail and commercial; in Neighborhood 4 in the Southern and Western Urban Neighborhoods Master Plan area.
Character of Property: The property is currently developed as a private school campus, the Tandem Friends School, with several school buildings and athletic fields. There is a maximum permitted enrollment of 250 students.	Use of Surrounding Properties: Monticello H.S. to the north, across Mill Creek Drive. Monticello Fire-Rescue Station to the west. Wooded properties and one single-family house to the south, with land owned by the County or the County School Board. Wooded parcel and apartments to the east.
Factors Favorable: 1. The school would continue to provide additional educational opportunities to the community. 2. As no enrollment increase is requested, the addition of a building is not expected to have an impact on the surrounding area.	Factors Unfavorable: 1. None identified.
RECOMMENDATION: Special Use Permit: Staff recommends approval of SP201900007, Tandem Friends School Pavilion, with conditions.	

STAFF PERSON:
PLANNING COMMISSION:
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

Andy Reitelbach, Senior Planner
February 18, 2020
April 15, 2020

SP201900007 Tandem Friends School Pavilion

PETITION

PROJECT: SP201900007 Tandem Friends School Pavilion

MAGISTERIAL DISTRICT: Scottsville

TAX MAP/PARCEL: 091000000002A0

LOCATION: 279 Tandem Lane, Charlottesville, VA 22902

PROPOSAL: Addition of a pavilion-type building for dining and meeting space at an existing private school campus.

PETITION: Request to amend existing special use permit SP201500021 to permit the construction of an approximately 4,500-square foot pavilion-type building for use as dining and meeting space at an existing private school campus on a 24.508-acre parcel. No increase in student enrollment is proposed. No dwelling units are proposed.

ZONING: R-1 Residential – 1 unit per acre.

OVERLAY DISTRICT(S): Entrance Corridor; Airport Impact Area; Steep Slopes - Managed

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN: Neighborhood Density Residential – residential (3-6 units/acre); supporting uses such as places of worship, schools, public and institutional uses and small-scale neighborhood serving retail and commercial; in Neighborhood 4 in the Southern and Western Urban Neighborhoods Master Plan area.

CHARACTER OF SURROUNDING AREA

The subject property is zoned R-1 Residential and is located along Mill Creek Drive, approximately 1,300 feet west of the intersection of Mill Creek Drive and Scottsville Road (see Attachment 1 – Location Map and Attachment 2 – Zoning Map). The area around the Tandem Friends School is largely composed of institutional uses. Monticello High School is located to the north, directly across Mill Creek Drive from the Tandem School. The Monticello Fire Rescue station is located on the parcel to the west of the Tandem School. There are additional County-owned or County School Board-owned properties, zoned R-1, to the south of the Tandem School. These parcels are largely wooded, with a single-family home located on a County-owned property. Directly to the east of the Tandem School is a wooded property, zoned R-1, with no structures. Farther to the east, at the northwest corner of the Mill Creek-Scottsville intersection is the Stone Creek apartment complex, zoned PRD.

PLANNING AND ZONING HISTORY

The school property is zoned R-1, Residential. The school use began in 1972.

SP1996-6 – Request for a 10,000-square ft. Community Hall for the school; approved 1996.

SP1996-25 – Request for increase in total enrollment and staffing from 177 to 200; approved 1996.

SP1996-49 – Request for 15,000-square ft. field house and gymnasium; approved 1996.

SP199700053 – Request for 14,000-square ft. math and science building; approved 1998.

SP200800065 – Request to add a classroom trailer to the site; approved 2009.

SP201300019 – Request to replace 8,000-square ft. gym building with 18,400-square ft. field house and to increase student enrollment to 250; approved 2014.

SP201500021 – Request for two-story middle school building with a 15,000-square ft. footprint; approved 2016.

DETAILS OF THE PROPOSAL

The applicant has requested to amend an existing special use permit to construct an additional building, one story plus mezzanine, on a private school campus (see Attachment 3 for the applicant's project narrative and Attachment 4 for the concept plan). The building would be a pavilion-type building to be used for extra dining space for students and a meeting space that can be used for student activities or as a rain location for outdoor activities. This building would have a covered footprint of approximately 4,500-square ft. The proposed building would have garage doors on the sides to allow for the building to be open to the elements during nice weather or to enclose the building during inclement weather. Bathrooms and storage space are also intended to be included in the space. At full build-out of the structure, the applicant also intends to include a kitchen to serve the assembly space, although this element is intended to be a later phase of the project. This kitchen, however, would be within the proposed 4,500-square-ft. footprint. A covered porch is proposed for the southern side of the building, along with an open deck on the western side of the new structure. New sidewalks are proposed around the sides of the building to provide access and help integrate the structure into the overall campus of the school. The location of the proposed building is adjacent to the existing grouping of instructional buildings. The proposed construction area is currently open grass with a few isolated trees. The applicant does not intend to disturb nearby managed steep slopes. If they are disturbed, however, the area of steep slopes will be subject to the design standards of managed steep slopes, including review by the County Engineer at the site plan stage for grading that is respectful of the terrain. This building will be subject to site plan review if the special use permit is approved.

No increase in the enrollment of the school is proposed with this request. There are also no proposed changes to the entrances into the school property, to the parking lots, or to the other existing buildings on the campus.

COMMUNITY MEETING

No community meeting was held for this application. Due to the nature of the proposal, including the addition of one building for use by existing students of the school as a dining and meeting space, with no proposed enrollment increase and no change to entrances or traffic flow along nearby streets, it was determined that the requirement for a community meeting could be waived.

ANALYSIS OF THE SPECIAL USE PERMIT REQUEST

Section 33.39(B) states that the Commission, in making its recommendation, shall consider the same factors found in Section 33.40 (B):

- 1. No substantial detriment. Whether the proposed special use will be a substantial detriment to adjacent parcels.***

In evaluating whether a use will be a detriment to adjacent properties, the intensity of the use and other impacts are evaluated. One measure of intensity of the use in relation to nearby and adjoining properties is the traffic impacts of the proposal. Another measure is the potential impact of the use on adjacent properties.

VDOT had no objection to the request as the maximum student enrollment is not being increase with this request and there are no proposed changes to the entrances to the Tandem School's property. No additional parking is needed with this request, as enrollment levels are not proposed to change.

The intent of both the applicant (the Tandem Friends School) and the conditions proposed in this Staff Report are to mitigate potential impacts on adjacent properties. There is not expected to be any impact on the parcel closest to the new pavilion building, which is TMP 92-2C1, to the east. This parcel is currently wooded with no structures. There is a line of trees along the Tandem School's side of the property boundary that is not expected to be disturbed, per the attached concept plan. In addition, this property is in the Entrance Corridor. The ARB (Architectural Review Board) staff planner has reviewed this proposal and has no objections. However, because this property is in the Entrance Corridor, a Certificate of Appropriateness will be required, and any potential impacts will be addressed with an ARB application at the site plan stage. Condition 4 in this staff report places conditions on amplified sound at the site to ensure that potential noise from the building does not have a detrimental effect on adjacent properties.

Staff finds that, with the proposed conditions, the use will not be a detriment to adjacent properties.

2. Character of the nearby area is unchanged. Whether the character of the adjacent parcels and the nearby area will be changed by the proposed special use.

The school has been operating in this location for several decades. The single additional building will not change the character of the adjacent parcels or nearby area, as the new building is proposed to be grouped among the other existing buildings on the school campus.

3. Harmony. Whether the proposed special use will be in harmony with the purpose and intent of this chapter,

The R-1 Residential zoning district was established to (1) recognize the existence of previously established low density residential districts in communities and the urban area; (2) provide incentives for clustering of development and provision of locational, environmental, and development amenities; and (3) provide for low density residential development in community areas and the urban area. Institutional uses such as a private school are allowed by special use permit.

A school has existed on this site since 1972. The proposed amendment would keep the same use, which is supportive of the residential uses permitted by right in the district. The additional building being requested with this application does not change the use and is in harmony with the purpose and intent of the district. The proposal will not significantly change the impact of the use (with the recommended conditions) or its consistency with the purpose and intent of the ordinance.

a. with the uses permitted by right in the district,

The proposed expansion of one additional building will not restrict the current uses or other by-right uses available at this property or adjacent properties.

b. with the regulations provided in Section 5 as applicable,

proposed to provide access to the new building and integrate this building into the larger school campus. Otherwise, the design of the site is not proposed to change.

SUMMARY

Staff finds the following factors favorable to this request:

1. The school would continue to provide additional educational opportunities to the community.
2. As no enrollment increase is requested, the addition of a building is not expected to have an impact on the surrounding area.

Staff finds the following factor(s) unfavorable to this request:

1. None identified.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Based on the findings described in this report and factors identified as favorable, **staff recommends approval of special use permit application SP201900007 Tandem Friends School Pavilion, with the following conditions:**

1. The development of the use shall be in general accord with the concept plan entitled "SUP Amendment Concept Plan – Resubmission," prepared by Train Architects, dated 09 December 2019, and last revised 10 December 2019, as determined by the Director of Planning and the Zoning Administrator. To be in general accord with the specified plan, development and use shall reflect the following major elements as shown on the plan:
 - a. Building orientation
 - b. Building size (including height)
 - c. Location of buildings
 - d. Limits of disturbance
 - e. Parking lot layout and landscaping

Minor modifications to the plan which do not conflict with the elements above may be made to ensure compliance with the Zoning Ordinance;

2. Additional buildings may only be authorized by a new special use permit;
3. Total school enrollment shall not exceed two hundred and fifty (250) students; and
4. Amplified sound from the pavilion will be subject to maximum sound level regulations as provided in Chapter 18-4.18.04. Amplified sound is prohibited between 10:00 p.m. each Sunday through Thursday night and 7:00 a.m. the following morning, and between 11:00 p.m. each Friday and Saturday night and 7:00 a.m. the following morning. Unamplified sound will not be subject to the maximum sound level regulations, as provided in Chapter 18-4.18.05(N).

POSSIBLE PLANNING COMMISSION MOTIONS for SP201900007

A. Should the Planning Commission **choose to recommend approval** of this special use permit:

Move to recommend approval of SP201900007, Tandem Friends School Pavilion, with conditions as stated in the staff report.

B. Should the Planning Commission **choose to recommend denial** of this special use permit:

Move to recommend denial of SP201900007, Tandem Friends School Pavilion.

Should a commissioner motion to recommend denial, he or she should state the reason(s) for recommending denial.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Location Map

Attachment 2 – Zoning Map

Attachment 3 – Project Narrative, dated December 10, 2019

Attachment 4 – Concept Plan, dated December 10, 2019