

# Agenda Report

**TO:** CITY COUNCIL

**DATE:** MARCH 23, 2009

**FROM:** CITY MANAGER

**SUBJECT:** MASTER DEVELOPMENT PLAN AMENDMENT FOR PASADENA CHRISTIAN SCHOOL AT 1515 NORTH LOS ROBLES AVENUE AND GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT AND ZONE CHANGE AT 1472 NORTH GARFIELD AVENUE

## RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that following a public hearing, the City Council:

1. Adopt the Revised Initial Environmental Study, Mitigated Negative Declaration, and Mitigation Monitoring Program (Attachments 2 and 3);
2. Adopt by Resolution the Specific Findings for the amendment of the General Plan Land Use designation from Medium Density Residential (0-16 units/acre) to Institutional for the parcel located at 1472 North Garfield Avenue, and approve the proposed General Plan Amendment, and adopt by Resolution the Specific Findings for the Master Development Plan Amendment and approve the proposed Master Development Plan Amendment with the Conditions of Approval (Exhibit B);
3. Find that the proposed zone change from RM-16 (Multi-Family Residential, 16 units/acre) to PS (Public and Semi-Public) is consistent with the purposes of Chapter 17.26 (PS, Public and Semi-Public District) of the Zoning Code, and approve the Zone Change;
4. Find that the remaining sites identified in the adopted 2000-2005 Housing Element are adequate to accommodate the City's share of the regional housing need for the planning period pursuant to Government Section 65584 (Attachment 4);
5. Find that the proposed removal of two protected trees and 5 non-protected tree are consistent with the criteria provided in the City's Tree Protection Ordinance, as discussed in the body of the report (Attachment 4) and approve the tree removal requests;
6. Direct the City Attorney to prepare an ordinance amending the official zoning map of the City of Pasadena within 30 days; and

7. Direct the City Clerk to file a Notice of Determination (Attachment 5) in accordance with Section 15075 of the State of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines with the Los Angeles County Recorder.

### **PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION**

On March 11, 2009, the Planning Commission reviewed and recommended approval of the Master Development Plan amendment at 1515 N. Los Robles Avenue and General Plan Amendment and Zone Change for 1472 N. Garfield Avenue. The Commission recommended revisions to Conditions of Approval, #1, #9, #16, #17, #21, #22, #24, #27, and #41 (Exhibit B). Generally, the proposed changes further addressed parking and traffic concerns expressed by neighbors at the Commission hearing.

Staff concurs with the revisions and they are shown in bold and italic in the attached conditions of approval, with the exception of condition #27. Under this condition, the Commission recommended that the TDM plan be submitted and **approved prior to the first building permit** for the Junior High building. Staff recommends that the TDM plan be submitted concurrent with the building permit for the construction of the Junior High building, but the approval of such plan be required **prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy**. This would provide the applicant with the time necessary to work with the neighbors and the Department of Transportation in preparing a plan that effectively addresses the traffic generated by the school activities.

### **DESIGN COMMISSION**

On March 9, 2009, the Design Commission reviewed the proposed Master Development Plan amendment and recommended approval of the Master Development Plan Amendment.

### **HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

On March 2, 2009, the Historic Preservation Commission reviewed the Master Plan amendment and recommended approval of the Plan with the following recommendations; 1) Requested more research by the staff to identify the date of construction of the rear addition to the building at 1533 N. Los Robles Avenue (to determine if the rear wing is original or an addition); 2) Supported dismantling of the porte-cochère on the south elevation of the building at 1533 N. Los Robles Avenue to accommodate reconfiguration of the parking area and access off Los Robles Avenue; 3) Requested the addition of landscaping and other features shall be added to screen the driveway and the parking lot on Los Robles Avenue from public view; 4) Suggested correcting the response in the Initial Study about the rear wing at 1533 N. Los Robles Avenue and omitting the reference of using the porte-cochère for a monument sign; 5) Approved removal of the rear wing of the building at 1533 N. Los Robles Avenue only if alternatives are first explored; and 5) In the event of the removal of the rear wing, re-use portions of the existing fabric (e.g., windows, window frames, shingles) in the reconstruction of the rear wall (the design of which should be consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and the Illustrated Guidelines for

Rehabilitating Historic Buildings). The Commission's recommendations are incorporated in the proposed Conditions of Approval #16-18.

### **NORTHWEST COMMISSION**

On February 26, 2009, the Northwest Commission reviewed and recommended approval of the proposed Master Plan amendment and supported the use of the First Source Hiring Ordinance to hire local labor.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The proposed amendment to the Pasadena Christian School Master Development Plan (MDP) consists of two phases over a fifteen-year period. The major elements of this amendment are: 1) construction of a single-story 8,323-square foot Junior High building in Phase 1; and 2) second-story addition of 11,800-square feet to the existing Elementary Classroom building and 16,460-square foot two-story additions to the Elementary Classroom building and Multi-Purpose building in Phase 2. The current school enrollment of 638 students will not increase in Phase 1; however, enrollment will increase to 688 students in Phase 2.

### **BACKGROUND**

Pasadena Christian School is proposing to amend their Master Plan to allow for expansion and upgrades to the school campus. With the recent acquisition of the property at 1472 N. Garfield Avenue, the school proposes to expand its campus operation onto this 0.20-acre parcel (Attachment 7).

Pasadena Christian School is a private school at 1515 N. Los Robles Avenue, south of Howard Street between N. Los Robles and N. Garfield Avenues. The school has been at this location for over 50 years. The existing 6.9-acre site contains classrooms for both elementary and junior high school (pre-school through eighth grade), library/science building, multi-purpose building, administrative offices, and maintenance facilities in thirteen buildings (Attachment 1).

The site is accessible on three sides by N. Garfield Avenue on the west, E. Howard Street on the north, and N. Los Robles Avenue on the east. To the north and east are single-family houses and to the west and south are multi-family residential.

The Pasadena Christian School frontage on North Los Robles Avenue is within the boundaries of an area that qualifies for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (at the local level of significance). The grouping of buildings extends along the west and east side of North Los Robles Avenue from Mountain Street to Montana Street. Within the School Master Plan boundary are two Craftsman-style houses, 1533 N. Los Robles Avenue and 1545 N. Los Robles Avenue, which contribute to the potential historic district. The amended Master Plan proposes retention and reuse of these houses on the site.

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The current amendment to the school's Master Plan consists of two phases:

## Phase 1

- Construction of a new, single-story 8,323-square foot Junior High building with a related open space area. An existing storage shed presently on this site will be removed;
- Expansion and remodel of the parking lot along North Los Robles Avenue;
- Remodel of the existing Administration building with a two-story addition of 410 square feet;
- Construction of a new Junior High “quad” west of the Los Robles Avenue parking lot and a new bus parking area for a school bus;
- Partial demolition of a rear (west) wing of the house at 1533 N. Los Robles Avenue (to create open space by the new Junior High building) and removal of the porte-cochère on the south end of the house (to accommodate the redesigned parking area on Los Robles); and
- General Plan Amendment and Zone Change for the recently acquired property at 1472 N. Garfield Avenue, to incorporate this parcel into the Master Plan area boundary.

## Phase 2

- Construction of a second floor addition of 11,800-square feet to the Elementary Classroom building;
- Construction of a new 2-story, 8,200-square foot addition to the Elementary Classroom building to provide seven new classrooms;
- Construction of an 8,260-square foot second-floor addition to the existing Auditorium/Multi-Purpose building;
- Provide a new covered lunch area for students near the elementary classrooms; and
- An increase of 50 students for a maximum enrollment of 688 students.

The total additional square footage for Phase 1 and Phase 2 development is 37,403.

## **ANALYSIS**

### ***Development Standards***

As intended by the Public and Semi-Public zoning designation, the development standards that govern institutional sites are set via the Master Development Plan process. The standards are formulated to respond to the uniqueness of the site and ensure compatibility with the surrounding area. The conditions of approval include a listing of standards and incorporate the requirements of the previous Master Development Plans (Exhibit B).

### ***Heights and Setbacks***

According to prior entitlements, the height limit at the existing Pre-School building and the Library/Media Center is 20 feet high. The table below outlines the setback for Phase 1 and Phase 2 development:

<b>Building</b>	<b>Maximum Height</b>	<b>Minimum Setback</b>
Junior High Building (Bldg. #3D) (Phase 1)	18 feet (1-story)	15 feet from Howard Street property line  15 feet from west property line adjacent to 388 E. Howard Street
Elementary Classroom – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Addition (Bldg. #15A) (Phase 2)	28 feet (2-story)	7 feet 6-inches from south property line  15 feet from eastern property line

The proposed design of the new structures is a contemporary reinterpretation of Craftsman architecture. This will be subject to design review.

The height of the additions would be consistent with the existing buildings on the campus and would not exceed the allowable height (32 ft.) in single-family zoning districts.

The new Junior High building and additions are located in areas away from the open space of the campus; thus leaving most of the existing open space untouched. A large open space (recreation and athletic field) is located in the center of the campus. A pocket of open space (new outdoor play area of 7,700-square feet) will be provided by the new development between the new Junior High building and the two Craftsman-style houses on Los Robles Avenue. The scale and character of the new building and additions will continue to respect the surrounding area in that the design of the building would be of contemporary craftsman and the height of this building and additions would not exceed the allowable height (32 ft.) in the single-family zoning districts.

The table in Attachment 7 outlines the number of stories, existing square footage, and Phase 1 and Phase 2 development of the Master Plan.

***Floor Area Ratio/Site Coverage***

The proposed project, at approximately 37,453-square feet of new building area (37,123 net new area), would add to the existing buildings (79,586 sq. ft.) for approximately 116,700 sq. ft. of total development in the campus. This would result in an increase of floor area ratio (FAR) from approximately .12 to .39. Currently, the lot coverage is 20%. The proposed lot coverage would be 25%.

***General Plan Amendment and Zone Change***

The current General Plan Land Use and Zoning designation for the parcel at 1472 N. Garfield Avenue allow primarily multi-family and residential-related uses; schools are allowed with a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) approval, thus the school is requesting a General Plan amendment from Medium Density Residential (0-16 dwelling units/net acre) to Institutional and a Zone Change from RM-16 (Multi-family Residential, 16

units/acre) to PS (Public and Semi-Public) to incorporate this parcel into the school's Master Plan area boundary to be used as an institutional use (Attachment 6). Currently, on this site is an existing single-family residence. No demolition is proposed and the single-family residence would be used as a school facility.

Retention of this single-family unit to be used as a school facility will be compatible with the adjacent residential to the north, west, and south, and would be less intense than 3-unit multi-family residential building that would be permitted under the RM-16 zone.

***Properties Not Owned by Pasadena Christian School***

Two properties, 1497 N. Los Robles Avenue and 388 E. Howard Street that are adjacent to the Master Plan boundary area are not owned by the school and opportunities for acquisition are very uncertain; therefore, they are not included in the Master Plan.

***Cultural Resources***

A one-story 330-square foot (15 X 22) shed at 396 E. Howard Street will be demolished. This shed is ineligible for designation (a finding confirmed in 2001 by the Historic Preservation Commission).

Initially the Master Plan amendment included the demolition of the house at 1533 N. Los Robles Avenue to create additional parking spaces in response to neighborhood concerns about traffic and parking. In balancing the need for adequate parking and for preservation of a historic resource, the School, working with staff, revised its Master Plan to maintain and adaptively use the house at 1533 N. Los Robles Avenue while allowing for minor alterations.

Retention of and minor alterations to the house at 1533 N. Los Robles Avenue involves the partial demolition of a rear (west) wing of the house and partial or full removal of the porte-cochère on the south end of the house. These alterations are proposed to widen the existing driveway (which runs through the porte-cochère), to remove a potential hazard (the pier of the porte-cochère) and to allow sufficient area for circulation between the new construction (Junior High building) and the existing building. The loss of these features has a less-than-significant impact on the overall integrity of the house and its status as a contributing building to a potential National Register district.

Portions of the porte-cochère could be used in a monument sign (or in other site features) on the site. A condition to the Master Plan will be submittal to the City of photographs of the porte-cochère.

***Housing***

Since 2003, State law has required local jurisdictions to assess any reduction in potential residential density on a parcel to determine whether it will affect the jurisdiction's capacity for its share of the regional housing need assessment (i.e., RHNA). If adequate capacity remains, then the jurisdiction may approve the reduction with two written findings: 1) this is a minor reduction in overall capacity consistent with

the general plan, including the housing element; and 2) the remaining sites that were included in the City's Housing Element analysis are adequate for the jurisdiction's share of regional housing need. These two findings can be made for this zone change and General Plan Amendment request. Therefore, the potential reduction by three housing units is within the housing forecast and is consistent with the City's 2000-2005 Housing Element of the General Plan, adopted in 2002. It is also within the range of housing forecast for Pasadena contained in the Southern California 2020 - a preliminary Growth Forecast: Regional Overview prepared by the Southern California Association of Governments.

### ***Tree Removal***

Pursuant to the Tree Protection Ordinance, P.M.C. Section 8.52.070A, the tree removal request was combined with the Master Development Plan application and therefore subject to review and approval by the City Council as part of the Master Plan. The project proposes to remove seven trees in Phase 1 development. No trees are proposed to be removed for Phase 2. Two trees, *Pittosporum undulatum*, meet the criteria for protection, while the remainder of trees either do not meet the criteria for protection or are not listed as protected species. The applicant is proposing to replace the removed trees with a minimum of 17 drought tolerant specimen trees. A condition of approval requires that the applicant submits a landscape plan to the Planning and Development Director for review and approval as part of design review. Such plan shall show the square feet of tree canopy coverage to be removed and replaced. Code requires replacement within a reasonable period of time. The replacement of tree canopy shall meet the finding in the tree protection ordinance. The removal of these trees is conditional upon review and approval of the final submitted landscape plan and tree canopy replacement.

### **NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING**

On February 10, 2009, a neighborhood meeting was held at the La Pintoresca Library. Six residents, the applicant, and the applicant's representatives attended the meeting. Concerns from the residents were traffic speed on Garfield Avenue, need for speed humps to address that issue, school staff parking on Ladera Street (north and south side), and the need for red-painted curb on the four corners of Howard Street and Garfield Avenue.

The School noted that moving the location of the Child Day Center from N. Los Robles Avenue to the Garfield Avenue side of the campus will alleviate the parking concerns because there are more parking spaces available on that side of the campus. Currently, the curb on the northeast and southeast corners of Howard Street and Garfield Avenue are painted red. A request to the Department of Transportation, Traffic Operations from the property owners of the northwest and southwest corner would be required to have the curbs painted red. Two-thirds of the signatures of the property owners within the surrounding area are required for the installation of speed humps. This would have to be initiated by the residents.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL**

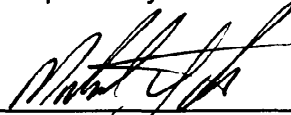
Staff prepared an Initial Study (Attachment 3), finding no significant detrimental impacts, and a draft Mitigated Negative Declaration has been prepared pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines. The initial study identifies that

Biological, Cultural Resources, and Transportation/Traffic may be affected by the implementation of the Master Development Plan; however, mitigation measures were identified and required.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

Amendment of the Pasadena Christian School Master Development Plan amendment will have no fiscal impact because the school shall be responsible for the cost of processing future review and approval of projects in the form of fees in accordance with the City's Fee Schedule at the time of submittal of plans.

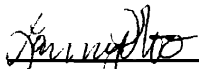
Respectfully submitted,



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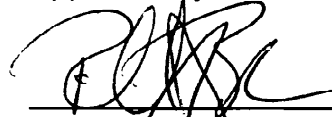
MICHAEL BECK  
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Prepared by:



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Approved by:



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Richard J. Bruckner, Director  
Planning and Development

Enclosure:

Resolution Approving the General Plan Amendment and Master Development Plan, with findings, for Pasadena Christian School and master plan map (Exhibit A)  
Pasadena Christian School Master Development Plan Amendment – Text and Conditions of Approval (Exhibit B)

Attachments:

- Attachment 1 – Site Plan for the Pasadena Christian School
- Attachment 2 – Revised Initial Environmental Study
- Attachment 3 – Mitigated Negative Declaration, Mitigation Measures, and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program
- Attachment 4 – Housing Findings Pursuant to Government Code Section 65584 and Findings for proposed tree removals
- Attachment 5 – Notice of Determination
- Attachment 6 – Zoning and General Plan Land Use designations
- Attachment 7 – Proposed Development for Phase 1 and Phase 2