



ARDEN HILLS
MEMORANDUM

DATE: November 6, 2019

PC Agenda Item **3.A**

TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Joe Hartmann – Associate Planner
Mike Mrosla – Community Development Manager/City Planner

SUBJECT: Planning Case # 19-010 – Public Hearing Required
Applicant: Mounds View Public Schools ISD # 621
Property Location: 1770 W County Rd E2 W
Request: Site Plan Review, Amended Conditional Use Permit

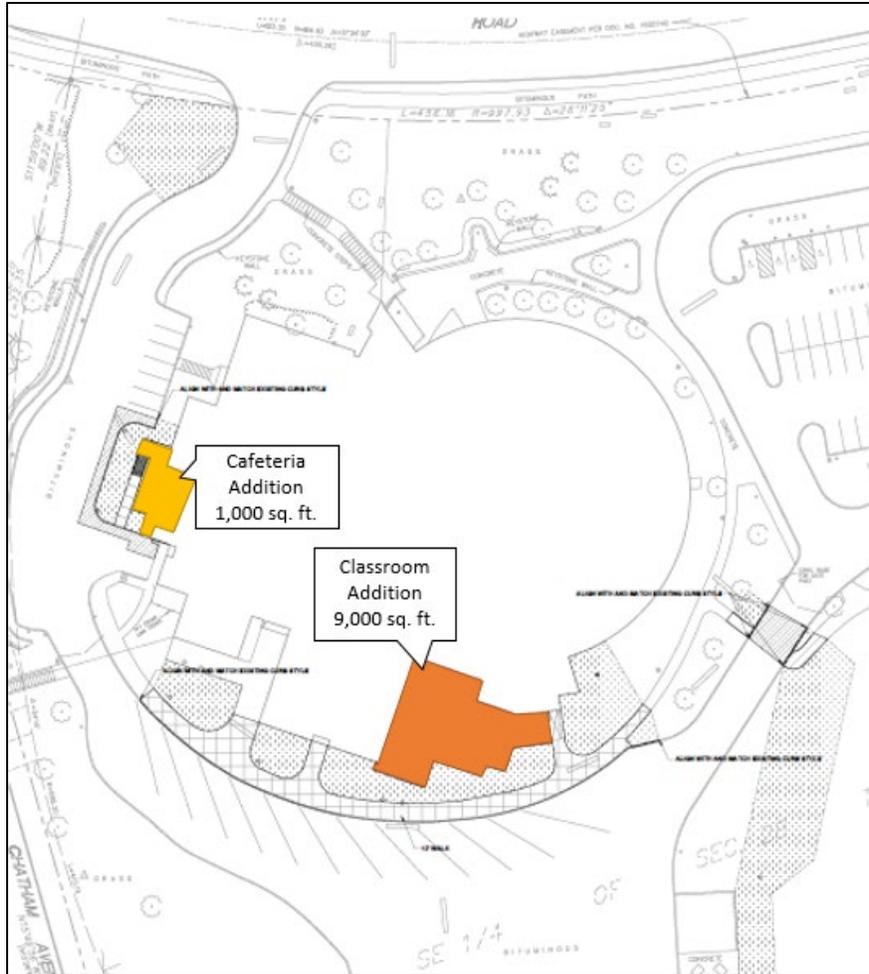
Requested Action

Mounds View Public Schools ISD #621 (“The Applicant”) is requesting a site plan review for a proposed renovation and addition to the Valentine Hills Elementary School located at 1770 County Road E2 W. The proposed project would include a renovation and 1,000 square foot expansion of the cafeteria and 9,000 square foot classroom and flex space addition. The proposed project would require an amendment to the existing Conditional Use Permit for the school to operate in an R-1 Single Family Residential zone.

Background

Valentine Hills Elementary School is a two-story brick building located on a 10.92 acre parcel that abuts a regional parks and trails system within a residential neighborhood adjacent to Interstate I-35 W. The Subject Property is bounded by single-family residential homes to the south and west and by parks and recreation spaces to the north and east. The original structure was built in 1969.

The property is zoned R-1, Single Family Residential District and is guided as Public or Institutional on the Land Use Plan. The use as a public elementary school was originally granted under a Conditional Use Permit when the school underwent a significant expansion in 1987 (Planning Case 87-03). The last major remodel to the property occurred in 2000 (Planning Case 00-023) for a 10,000 square foot classroom addition. As per City Code Section 1320.075 subd. 2, the Subject Property meets the special requirements for a general education school within the Single Family Residential (R-1) District.



Approvals:

1. Site Plan Review

As per the plans submitted, the Applicant is proposing two (2) building additions. The classroom addition is located on the south side of the building and is highlighted in orange in the image above. This proposed addition is located on existing greenspace onsite. The proposed addition will be two (2) stories totaling 9,000 square feet and match the height of the existing school. The proposed addition will include flex learning space, one (1) additional classroom and the relocation of existing academic programs that are currently located within three (3) existing classrooms. The three (3) existing classrooms will then be remodeled and utilized as standalone classrooms. The proposed addition on the west side of the building highlighted in yellow in the image above is a 1,000-square foot addition to the existing cafeteria that will match the height of the existing cafeteria.

2. Conditional Use Permit Amendment

The Zoning Ordinance requires a Conditional Use Permit for a “general education school” in the R-1 Zoning District where the Subject Property is located under City Code Section 1320.05. Because the renovation will expand the area of the building, a Conditional Use Permit amendment is required for the Subject Property.

Per City Code Section 1355.06, an application for a Conditional Use Permit amendment shall be administered in the same manner as required for a new application. Any structural alteration, enlargement or intensification change in site plan, or similar change not specially permitted, shall require City Council action and all procedures shall apply as if a new application were being requested.

Plan Evaluation

1. Chapter 13, Zoning Code Review

Section 1320 – District Provisions

Per City Code Section 1320.075, general education schools are permitted by conditional use as long as they meet special requirements for the R-1 District, including that they “be located in a campus setting on a contiguous area of land no less than ten (10) acres in size” and that the “buildings are owned or leased by the institution or school district providing the School use.” The Subject Property is located on a 10.92 acre lot owned by the Mounds View Public Schools ISD #621. In addition, the proposed additions meet all R-1 zoning requirements for setbacks and lot coverage.

Section 1325 – General Regulations

Lighting Plan

There are currently nine (9) exterior lights on the property facing the west and south side entrances and parking lots. Six (6) new exterior LED lamps are proposed for the site to further illuminate parking lot areas outside where the proposed additions will be constructed. According to Section 1325.05 Subd 3, “The source of illumination shall be hooded, concealed or controlled in a manner so as not to be visible from adjoining lots, streets or highways or residential areas.” The new lighting proposed will be LED fixtures that project all of their light in a downward direction to reduce light pollution. The plans submitted by the Applicant show the illumination will dissipate to roughly one (1) footcandle or less when measured from the property lines, so as not to be visible from adjacent properties. Because much of the Subject Property is adjacent to park land and some low-density single family housing, staff does not anticipate any issues with the proposed lighting. As a condition of approval, all lighting shall be downward directed shoebox style with flush lenses.

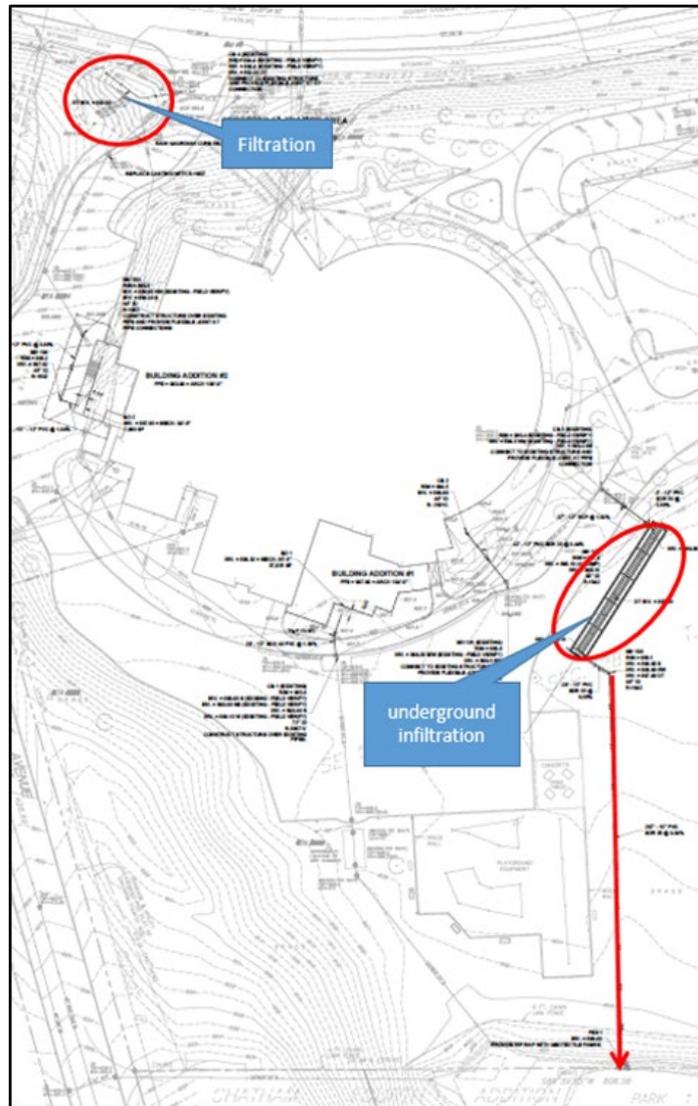
Landscaping Plan

The City Code Section 1325.05 subd. 1 requires that a minimum number of caliper inches of trees be provided based on the gross square footage of the building on the property. For the 11,000 square foot addition, the minimum required caliper inches is 31.7 inches. The submitted landscaping plan shows 12 new trees ranging in sizes from two to four caliper inches for a total of

35.5 caliper inches. The majority of the proposed trees are located on the west side of the property adjacent to Chatham Avenue. The Applicant is not proposing to remove any existing significant trees onsite as part of this project.

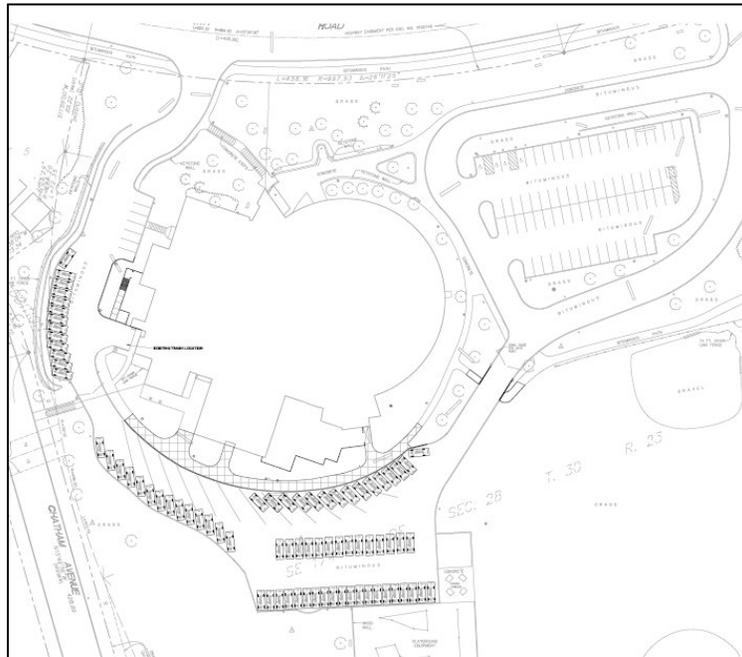
Stormwater

The site plan includes a stormwater plan. The Applicant is proposing to construct an underground infiltration system. The proposed system will be constructed to the east of the proposed additions and is shown on the image below. The proposed system will discharge into an existing pond located on the south side of the subject property. The Applicant is also proposing a filtration pond located adjacent to the western site access.



Parking Plan

Valentine Hill Elementary School currently has 38 classrooms and 75 staff persons. The existing site has 87 parking stalls. The proposed addition is not anticipated to generate additional parking demand on site because the addition will support existing academic programs and staff levels. The Applicant submitted a proof of parking plan show below. The proof of parking plan demonstrates that an additional 77 parking spaces could be made available on the south side of the lot if needed for events.



Design Standards

The proposed additions are utilizing the same materials as the existing building and the overall design of the proposed addition complements the existing architectural theme found on site. Brick is the primary material used on the proposed addition. To ensure the materials match the existing building, staff is requiring the Applicant to provide a materials board prior to the issuance of a building permit.



Suggested Findings of Fact

Staff offers the following findings of fact for consideration:

1. Valentine Hills Elementary School is a two-story brick building located on a 10.92 acre parcel within a residential area.
2. Mounds View Public Schools ISD #621 is requesting site plan review for a proposed expansion to the Valentine Hills Elementary School.
3. The use of the Subject Property as a public elementary school is permitted under a Conditional Use Permit.
4. Any expansion of the existing building would require the approval of a Conditional Use Permit Amendment.
5. The new addition will allow for a new cafeteria renovation and expansion, and four additional classrooms, as well as upgrades to the utilities and exterior lighting.
6. Zoning Code Review of the Subject Property regulations concludes that the proposed land use application conforms to City district provisions.
7. The proposed site plan will not impact parking, loading, or circulation demands since the addition is to better accommodate existing building uses and will not increase capacity or intensity of use.
8. The proposal is not expected to adversely affect the surrounding area of the community as a whole.

Options and Motion Language

Staff has provided the following options and motion language for this case. The Planning Commission should consider providing additional findings of fact as part of the motion to support their recommendation for approval or denial.

1. Recommend Approval with Conditions: Motion to recommend *approval* of Planning Case 19-010 for a Site Plan Review and Conditional Use Permit Amendment at 1770 County Road E2, based on the findings of fact and submitted plans, subject to the following conditions:
 1. All conditions of the original Conditional Use Permit shall remain in full force and effect. The Conditional Use Permit Amendment approvals shall expire one year from the date of City Council approval unless a building permit has been requested or a time extension has been granted by the City Council.
 2. The project shall be completed in accordance with the plans submitted as amended by the conditions of approval. Any significant changes to the plans, as determined by the City Planner, shall require review and approval by the Planning Commission and City Council.
 3. A Grading and Erosion permit shall be obtained from the city's Engineering Division prior to commencing any grading, land disturbance or utility activities. The Applicant shall be responsible for obtaining any permits necessary from other agencies, including but not limited to, MPCA, Rice Creek Watershed District, and Ramsey County prior to the start of any site activities.

4. Heavy duty silt fence and adequate erosion control around the entire construction site shall be required and maintained by the Developer during construction to ensure that sediment and storm water does not leave the project site.
 5. The Applicant shall be responsible for protecting the proposed on-site storm sewer infrastructure and components and any existing storm sewer from exposure to any and all stormwater runoff, sediments and debris during all construction activities.
 6. Prior to the issuance of a Grading and Erosion permit, the Engineering Department shall review and approve final grading and utility plans in writing.
 7. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, a landscape financial security of \$2,500 shall be submitted. Landscape financial security shall be held for two full growing seasons.
 8. All rooftop or ground mounted mechanical equipment shall be hidden from view with the same materials used on the building in accordance with City Code requirements.
 9. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the Applicant shall submit a materials board to be approved in writing by staff.
 10. All light poles, including base, shall be a maximum of 25 feet in height and shall be shoebox style, downward directed, with high-pressure sodium lamps or LED and flush lenses. Other than wash or architectural lighting, attached security lighting shall be shoebox style, downward directed with flush lenses. If complaints are received the lighting adjacent to residential uses shall utilize house shields as directed by the City. In addition, any lighting under canopies (building entries) shall be recessed and use a flush lens.
2. Recommend Approval without Conditions: Motion to recommend *approval* of Planning Case 19-010 for a Site Plan Review and Conditional Use Permit Amendment at 1770 County Road E2 W, based on the findings of fact and submitted plans in the November 6th, 2019 Report to the Planning Commission.
 3. Recommend Denial: Motion to recommend *denial* of Planning Case 19-010 for a Site Plan Review and Conditional Use Permit Amendment at 1770 County Road E2 W, based on the following findings of fact: *the Planning Commission should identify findings to deny should specifically reference the reasons for denial and why those reasons cannot be mitigated.*
 4. Table: Motion to *table* Planning Case 19-010 for a Site Plan Review and Conditional Use Permit Amendment at 1770 County Road E2 W for the following reasons: *the Planning Commission should identify a specific reason and/or information request should be included with a motion to table.*

Notice and Public Comments

A public hearing notice for the proposed Conditional Use Permit Amendment was mailed to all properties within 1,000 feet of the Subject Property and a Public Hearing notice was published in the Pioneer Press on October 25, 2019. No public comments were received in regard to the proposal.

A neighborhood meeting was held on Wednesday, October 16, 2019. Neighborhood meeting notices were mailed to all properties within 1,000 feet of the subject property. Two (2) residents were in attendance. Questions were raised about the timing of the project and potential rooftop equipment noise.

Deadline for Agency Actions

The City of Arden Hills received the completed application for this request on October 11, 2019. Pursuant to Minnesota State Statute, the City must act on this request by December 10, 2019 (60 days), unless the City provides the petitioner with written reasons for an additional 60 day review period. The City may, with the consent of the applicant, extend the review period beyond the initial 120 days.

Attachments

- A. Application
- B. Location map
- C. 11x17 Site Plans