



ARDEN HILLS
MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 7, 2021 PC Agenda Item **3.B**

TO: Planning Commission Chair and Commissioners

FROM: Corrin Bemis, Consultant Planner

SUBJECT: Planning Case #21-002 – Public Hearing Required
Applicant: Bethel University
Property Location: 3900 Bethel Drive
Request: Conditional Use Permit Amendment and Site Plan Review

Requested Action

Bethel University (“The Applicant”) the applicant is requesting a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) Amendment and Site Plan Review for a proposed project at 3900 Bethel Drive (“Subject Property”) to update the existing football and practice fields located in the southern quadrant of the Bethel University Campus. Specific improvements include converting the football field to artificial turf with a new running track constructed around it. The proposed project will also include sports field lighting, scoreboards, spectator plazas, and perimeter fencing, as well as updates to the existing grandstand and press box. Seating capacity will remain as is.

Background

1. Overview of Request

Bethel University is proposing to update the existing football and practice fields located in the southern quadrant of their main campus at 3900 Bethel Drive. The Applicant is proposing to convert the existing grass football field into a synthetic turf stadium field with a new track constructed around it and the existing grass practice field into a synthetic turf multi-purpose field. The Applicant is also proposing changes to the lighting around the two fields, the spectator plazas, the perimeter fencing, and the grandstand and press box.

Bethel University operates under a CUP Master Plan. As the university comes forward with plans, they are reviewed against the Master Plan for consistency. Building plans that are consistent with the Master Plan require a Site Plan Review. A CUP Amendment is required when plans are not included in the approved Master Plan. The two proposed improvements to the football field and the practice field are not included on the Master Plan and a CUP Amendment is therefore required.

2. Site Data

Future Land Use Plan:	Public and Institutional
Existing Land Use:	Public and Institutional
Zoning:	INST – Institutional District
Size:	191.32 Acres (Including main campus, athletic complex, and part of Lake Valentine)
Topography:	Varied topography across campus

Plan Evaluation

Chapter 13, Zoning Regulations Review

Section 1320.06 – District Requirements Chart

1. District Provisions (INST Institutional District) – Section 1320

Under the 2040 Comprehensive Plan, the Bethel University campus is guided as Public & Institutional on the land use plan. The main Bethel University campus is located in the Institutional Zoning District. Higher education campus uses, including but not limited to classrooms and laboratories, are allowed conditional uses in this district. The proposed changes to the football and practice fields that the Applicants propose to add are complementary to the use of the Subject Property as an educational institution.

A. Building and Landscaping Coverage – Meets Requirements

The Zoning Code requirements for the INST District allow a maximum building footprint of 35% and a minimum landscape area of 26%. Landscaping is defined as all plantings, including trees, grass, and shrubs. The table below identifies the proposed percentages.

The proposed additions would not result in additional structure coverage on the Subject Property. The approved CUP for the campus limits the total lot coverage of impervious surfaces to 25% and requires a minimum landscape lot area of 75%. As proposed, the new additions would not exceed the lot coverage requirements for the campus.

B. Height – Meets Requirements

The maximum height in the INST District is 35 feet. Bethel University is not proposing to build any new buildings with their football field improvements project. Bethel University will stay in compliance with district height requirements.

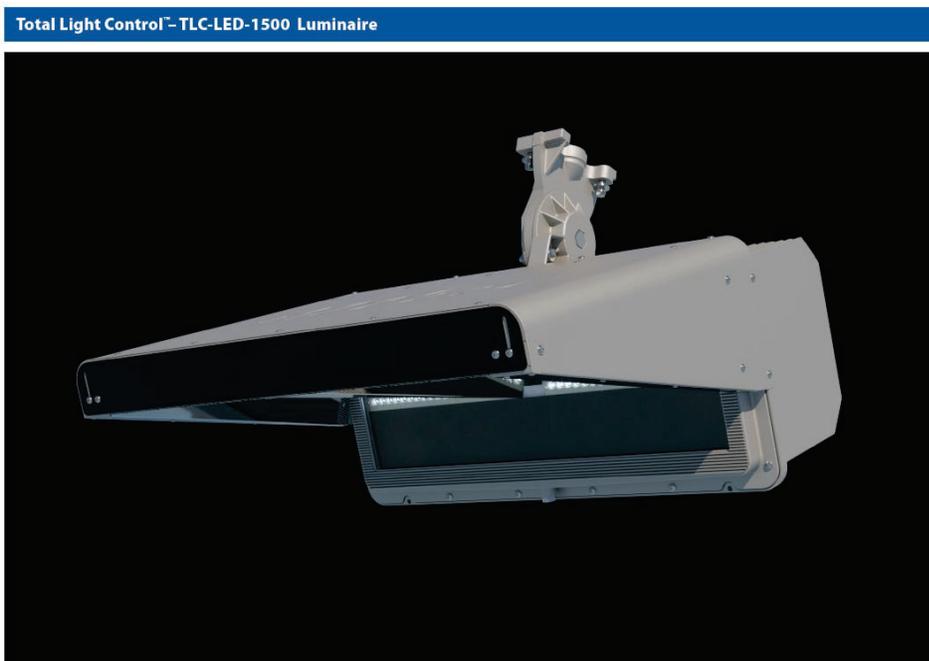
C. Setbacks – Meets Requirements

Setbacks in the INST District are 50 feet in the front yard, 20 feet in the rear yard, and 10 feet in the side yard. Structures must be located a minimum of 100 feet from abutting residential property. There are currently no structures within 100 feet of abutting residential properties. The Applicant is not proposing any structures within the 100 feet setback. The proposed practice field would be setback 12 feet from the side yard property line.

2. Design Standards - Section 1325.05 and 1325.05

A. Lighting – Additional Information Requested

The Applicant is proposing the addition of stadium lighting around the football field and track, along the bleachers, and around the practice field. Section 1325.05 Subd. 3 requires lighting in all districts to direct light away from adjoining lots and public streets. Direct or sky-reflected glare, from floodlights or high temperature processes such as combustion or welding, shall not be directed at any adjoining lots or public streets. All lighting proposed by the Applicant will face downward onto the fields. Section 1325.05 Subd. 3 also requires the source of illuminate to be hooded, concealed or controlled in a manner so as to direct the lighting pattern only on the site to which the lighting is intended. The Applicant is proposing lighting fixtures that are shielded on all four sides to direct the lighting down towards the fields. For information about the Applicant's lighting plan can be found in Attachment E.



Any light or combination of lights shall not cast light that exceeds a meter reading of one foot candle on the travel lanes of adjoining public streets or 0.4 foot candles on adjoining residential property. The maximum illumination at the property line is 1.28 foot candles. All illumination readings over 0.4 foot candles are located at least 200 feet from the nearest residential property. Given the downward facing direction of the stadium lighting and the fields' distance from any residential properties, staff do not anticipate any issues with regard to lighting. However, as a condition of approval staff recommends the Applicant be required to provide photometric calculations for the lighting at the property lines of all adjacent residential properties.

B. Screening and Fencing – Meets Requirements

Screens and fencing help minimize adverse impacts of public nuisances, such as noise, glare, activity, or dust. The football and practice field update will be screened using a mix of landscaping and fencing. The proposed project includes upgrades to the fencing around the football and practice

fields. Fencing is proposed on the northeast side of the football field, south of the Discus-Hammer Throw Event and Shot Put facilities, and along the west side of the football field.

C. Tree Preservation – *Additional Information Requested*

A Tree Preservation Plan is required as part of an application when City grading permit or erosion control permit is required. The Tree Protection Plan submitted by the Applicant shows that 34 significant trees are set for removal. The Ordinance allows 10% to be removed without replacement. The remaining caliper inches to be removed must be replaced at a ratio of 1 caliper inch for each 2 inches removed. The proposed landscaping plan identifies a total of 78 caliper inches of replacement trees, all three (3) caliper inch Heritage Oak trees. As a condition of approval, staff recommends requiring the Applicant to provide updated information about the size and type of trees being removed. Staff also recommends a landscaping letter of credit or escrow be required.

D. Parking, Traffic, and Circulation – *Meets Requirements*

The proposed additions are not anticipated to generate additional parking demand on the campus because the seating capacity will remain as is. Users of the proposed football and practice fields will continue to use either the Heritage Parking Lot, located north of the fields, or the SoHo Parking Lot, located east of the fields.

1355.04 Procedural Requirements for Specific Applications

Section 1355.04, Subd. 3 of the Arden Hills Zoning Code lists the criteria for evaluating a Conditional Use Permit. The Planning Commission and City Council should consider the effect of the proposed use upon the health, safety, convenience and general welfare of the owners and occupants of the surrounding land, in particular, and the community as a whole, in general, including but not limited to the following factors:

1. Existing and anticipated traffic and parking conditions;
2. Noise, glare, odors, vibration, smoke, dust, air pollution, heat, liquid or solid waste, and other nuisance characteristics;
3. Drainage;
4. Population density;
5. Visual and land use compatibility with uses and structures on surrounding land; adjoining land values;
6. Park dedications where applicable; and the
7. Orderly development of the neighborhood and the City within the general purpose and intent of this ordinance and the Comprehensive Development Plan for the City.

In the granting of a conditional use permit, the City Council may impose such conditions, in addition to the general conditions and requirements of this Code to which every conditional use permit shall be subject, as it deems necessary to serve and protect the health, safety, convenience and general welfare of the community. Such conditions may include, among other things, a time limit within which the conditional use or a portion thereof, or improvements in connection therewith are to be established, constructed, completed or commenced, and a requirement that the person or firm to whom the conditional use permit has been granted deposit with the City either cash or a performance bond in a sum equal to one

hundred twenty five (125%) percent of the estimated cost, as determined by the City Engineer, of improvements to be constructed in accordance with the permit to insure completion thereof within the time limit specified in the permit. The conditions so imposed by the City Council shall be specifically stated in the permit and maybe subject to periodic review as determined by the City Council. The violation of any special or general condition set forth in a conditional use permit shall constitute a violation of this Code.

Additional Review

Public Works Director/City Engineer

The Public Works Director/City Engineer has reviewed the plans and has provided the Applicant with a comment letter (Attachment F) and all comments shall be adopted herein by reference as a condition of approval.

Findings of Fact

The Planning Commission must make a finding as to whether or not the proposed application would adversely affect the surrounding neighborhood or the community as a whole based on the aforementioned factors. Staff offers the following findings for consideration:

General Findings:

1. The Bethel University main campus at 3900 Bethel Drive is located in the Institutional Zoning District.
2. A Higher Education, College Campus is a Conditional Use in the Institutional District.
3. Bethel University operates under a Conditional Use Permit Master Plan.
4. The proposed additions are not included on the Master Plan and a CUP Amendment is required.
5. Bethel University has requested Site Plan Review approval for the proposed changes to the football and practice fields.
6. The proposed changes to the football and practice fields would be in compliance with all provisions of the Zoning Code.
7. A public hearing for a PUD Amendment request is required before the request can be brought before the City Council.
8. The Planning Commission conducted a public hearing on April 7, 2021.

Conditional Use Permit Evaluation Findings:

9. The proposed plan is not anticipated to have any impact on traffic or parking conditions because the additions do not include an increase in football field seating.
10. The proposed plan includes the addition of LED lights and will increase illumination around the football fields.
11. The proposed plan will not produce any permanent noise, odors, vibration, smoke, dust, air pollution, heat, liquid, or solid waste, and other nuisance characteristics.
12. The proposed plan will impact drainage on the site.
13. The proposed plan will not impact population density.
14. The proposed plan is not expected to have a visual impact on surrounding properties or on land use compatibility with uses and structures on surrounding land or adjoining land

values because the new additions will not be easily visible from outside the Bethel University campus.

15. Park dedication requirements are not applicable.
16. The proposed plan does not conflict with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Code or the Comprehensive Development Plan for the City.

Proposed Motion Language

1. Recommend Approval with Conditions: Motion to recommend *approval* of Planning Case 21-002 for a Conditional Use Permit Amendment and Site Plan Review at 3900 Bethel Drive, based on the findings of fact and the submitted plans, as amended by the conditions in the April 7, 2021, Report to the Planning Commission:
 - a. All conditions of the original Conditional Use Permit shall remain in full force and effect.
 - b. Prior to the issuance of a grading permit, all items identified in the March 11, 2021 Engineering Division memo shall be addressed. All comments shall be adopted herein by reference.
 - c. The project shall be completed in accordance with the plans submitted as amended by the conditions of approval. Any significant changes to these plans, as determined by the City Planner, shall require review and approval by the Planning Commission and City Council.
 - d. The proposed structures shall conform to all other regulations in the City Code.
 - e. 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.
 - f. 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.
 - g. 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.
 - h. Prior to the issuance of a grading permit, a landscape financial security equal to 125% of the cost of the landscaping to be installed on the site shall be submitted. The Applicant must submit a detailed cost estimate for the landscaping so staff can determine the final amount. Landscape financial security shall be held for two full growing seasons.
 - i. Prior to the issuance of a grading permit, the Applicant shall provide updated information about the size and type of trees being removed.
 - j. Prior to the issuance of a grading permit, a landscaping letter of credit or escrow shall be required.
 - k. The Applicant shall be required to provide photometric calculations for the lighting at the property lines of all adjacent residential properties.

2. Recommend Approval as Submitted: Motion to recommend *approval* of Planning Case 21-002 for a Conditional Use Permit Amendment and Site Plan Review at 3900 Bethel Drive, based on the findings of fact and the submitted plans in the April 7, 2021 Report to the Planning Commission.
3. Recommend Denial: Motion to recommend *denial* of Planning Case 21-002 for a Conditional Use Permit Amendment and Site Plan Review at 3900 Bethel Drive, based on the following findings of fact: *findings to deny should specifically reference the reasons for denial*.
4. Table: Motion to *table* Planning Case 21-002 for a Conditional Use Permit Amendment and Site Plan Review at 3900 Bethel Drive: *a specific reason and/or information request should be included with a motion to table*.

Public Notice and Comments

The Applicant conducted a neighborhood meeting via Zoom on February 9, 2021. The Applicant did not receive community pushback at this meeting.

Staff published a notice in the *Pioneer Press* as per City procedure. Public notices were mailed out on Friday, March 26, 2021. Staff has not received any public comments regarding this application as of April 1, 2021.

Deadline for Agency Actions

The City of Arden Hills received the completed application for this request on March 24, 2021. Pursuant to Minnesota State Statute, the City must act on this request by May 23, 2021 (60 days), unless the City provides the petitioner with written reasons for an additional 60-day review period. With consent of the applicant, the City may extend the review period beyond the initial 120 days.

Attachments

- A. Land Use Application
- B. Location Map
- C. Bethel University – Athletics Complex – Concept 1
- D. Submittal Documents
- E. Lighting Plan
- F. Engineering Comment Letter