

SPECIAL USE EXCEPTION REVIEW REPORT

Petition Number: SUE 16-02

Petitioner: J. Scott Bennett P.E. for
Parkway School District
455 N. Woods Mill Rd.
Chesterfield, MO 63017
314-415-8100

Agent/Engineer: Stanley Visnovske
Engineering Design Source, Inc.
16141 Swingley Ridge Rd.
Chesterfield, MO 63017
636-537-5585

Project Name: Henry Elementary parking lot

Filing Date: 3/21/16

Review Report Date: 4/12/16

Submission Compliance Certification Date: 4/18/16

Requested Action: Special Use Exception

Purpose: Front Yard arking

Code Section (s): Article XVI, Sec. 12

Location: 700 Henry Ave.
Ballwin, MO 63011

Existing Land Use/Zoning Single Family / County R-2

Surrounding Land Use/Zoning: North –Single Family/ County R-2
South - Single Family/ County R-2
West -Single Family/ County R-2
East - Single Family/ County R-2

Plan Designation: Institutional

Project Description:

The Parkway School District presently owns and operates the Henry Elementary School at 700

Henry Ave., Ballwin, MO. The district is in the process of building additions to the school. As elementary schools are allowed uses in the R-2 district, no Planning and Zoning Commission approval was necessary to issue the building permit. The district has determined that it also wants to expand the parking lot on the west side of the building within the required front yard. The existing front yard parking lot has been in place since the school was originally built prior to annexation into Ballwin in 1996 and is legally nonconforming. The existing parking lot is legally nonconforming and can be maintained in its present configuration in perpetuity; expansion of the lot, however, can only be allowed by SUE, hence this petition.

At the time the included plans were submitted for consideration by Ballwin the construction bids for this project were yet to be received. The plans therefore show alternative scenarios for construction based upon the alternatives that were part of the bid package. The Parkway School District has since opened bids and selected all of the construction alternatives, so all of the improvements on the plans will be built. Disregard any notes suggesting alternatives for construction other than what is clearly shown on the plans.

Zoning Ordinance Requirements/County R-2 District:

1. This site is zoned County R-2 Single Family. Elementary schools are an allowed use in the County R-2 district with no special restrictions or limitations.

Zoning Ordinance Requirements/SUE Regulations (Article XIV)

1. Section 1 (14) provides that the front yard parking use is only allowed by SUE in conjunction with nonresidential uses in the residential districts. This is the purpose for this petition.
2. Sec. 2 (1) *Minimum Yard Requirements*: The minimum yard requirements of the County R-2 District appear to have been met by this proposal.
3. Sec. 2 (2) *Site Illumination*: This section only requires that appropriate illumination be provided and that it not disturb the adjacent property. There are no minimum standards or guidelines for fixtures or illumination levels. The existing site illumination provided by pole top luminaries will be retained. **Two new pole top luminaries will be added in the island separating the new parking area from the drive through lanes. I see no reason for these additional luminaries to be problematic as they are at a greater distance from the surrounding residential uses than are the existing luminaries.**
4. Sec. 2 (3) *Greenery and Planting*: The area proposed for the construction of the parking lot is presently a grassy area. **The plans call for the removal of the turf and the construction of a significant retaining wall to allow the expansion of the parking area. The disturbed lawn areas will be restored with sod or landscaped beds. Additionally, significant landscaping will be placed in areas of the site that are not within the front yard. These**

plantings are in conjunction with site work and building additions that are outside of the scope of this petition but will significantly improve the overall function and aesthetic appeal of the site.

5. Sec. 2 (4) *Fencing*: There is presently no fencing in the front yard of this site. A decorative fence will be placed along the top of the retaining wall to assure safety.

6. Sec 2 (5) *Parking*: Parking on this site is in excess of the minimum parking requirements of the code and **no additional parking is actually required for the building expansion. The proposed parking lot addition will, however, provide an additional 17 spaces above what is presently available on the site.**

7. Sec. 2 (6) *Pavement*: **The proposed pavement for the new parking lot is comprised of pervious pavers laid over a clean stone base to provide storage for detention and aquifer/ground water recharge. This is consistent with MSD best management practices (bmp's) as currently enforced. This is also consistent with Ballwin's minimum standards for commercial parking lot construction.**

8. Sec 2 (7) *Storm water runoff control*: A synopsis of the stormwater runoff impact of the entire project (building additions and parking lot expansion) is on page C2. The two plans on this page reflect the existing conditions (left plan) and the future conditions (right plan) for the five areas of the site that will be changed as a result of the construction.

The left plan shows that the 5 areas subject to reconstruction are comprised of .67 acres of vegetation which is 5% impervious and .7 acres of pavement which is essentially 100% impervious. Together these 5 areas generate a differential runoff of 3.59 cubic feet per second based upon the 15 year frequency storm which is MSD's standard runoff model.

The right plan shows the same 5 areas as they will be configured after construction is complete. These 5 areas will be comprised of .33 acres of vegetation at 5% impervious, .42 acres of pervious pavers at .5% impervious or less and .61 acres of pavement/new rooftop at approximately 100% impervious. Together the differential runoff after construction is complete will be 3.43 cubic feet per second. The land area covered by pavers is considered to have a 5% impervious rating because the pavers allow runoff to pass through into a clean rock bed underneath that sufficient porosity to provide water detention and permits reabsorption of the water into the soil in a manner not unlike that which happens in a lawn area. **The net difference in the runoff from the site resulting from the proposed improvements is a decrease of .16 cubic foot per second. No surface detention is required.**

It is my understanding as of this writing that these plans have not yet been approved by MSD. It would appear as though they will be approved, but it is a possibility that minor changes to the plans may be required as they pass through the MSD review procedure.

9. Sec. 2 (8) *Loading docks and facilities*: This not an issue for this petition.

10. Sec. 2 (9) *Ingress and Egress*: No change to the current curb cut configuration is proposed or recommended. The traffic volume change associated with the construction of a

larger parking lot is virtually zero.

11. Sec. 2 (10) *Adequate area for the use*: The overall site is large and only a portion is presently developed or proposed for additional development. There does not appear to be a basis to support the position that it is not adequate to accommodate the proposed uses.

12. Sec. 2 (11) *Dead storage, dismantling and repair of automobiles*: This regulation is not an issue for an elementary school. Ballwin has regulations to address this problem should it for some reason occur.

13. Sec. 2 (12) *Rubbish and trash disposal and screening*: There are presently trash disposal containers on site. The location is being adjusted slightly, but the containers are in a rear yard area. It appears as though they will be partially screened by a short retaining wall but screening is not required in such areas.

14. Sec 4 (6) (1) *Increase traffic hazards*: **The floor area of the building is being increased and no site plan approval from Ballwin is necessary for this to happen. It is the nature of schools that floor area is a function of attendance, not the other way around as is common in the commercial sector. The parking demand increase associated with this school's growing attendance and need for a building expansion has already occurred and has in fact presaged the need for a larger parking facility. I do not, therefore, see evidence for the position that expanded front yard parking will have a substantive negative impact on traffic hazards. Any associated traffic hazards are already there.**

15. Sec. 4 (6) (2) *Neighborhood character impact*: This site has been developed as an elementary school with front yard parking in the middle of a single family residential neighborhood since the 1960's. It has been expanded in size over the years as the neighborhood has grown. **One can carry on an esoteric debate about the impact of a building of this scale with its associated activity level on the neighborhood of much smaller residential structures, but schools are commonly located in residential neighborhoods and the growth has been gradual and incremental. It is difficult to support the position that this building's historical impact on the character of the neighborhood has intensified as a result of such incremental growth. Certainly the construction of twenty some additional parking spaces in essentially the same area as the original parking lot does not seem to present much likelihood of negatively impacting the character of this neighborhood.**

16. Sec. 4 (6) (3) *Community general welfare impact*: **There is little evidence that this use would have any substantial negative impact on the general welfare of the community. As described in #15, the school's basic function has not changed over the years, furthermore, elementary schools are considered to be compatible land uses within residential neighborhoods by Ballwin regulations and state statutes.**

17. Sec. 4 (6) (4) *Overtax public utilities*: I see no basis for the position that there will be a substantive impact on any utilities.

18. *Sec. 4 (6) (5) Adverse impact on public health and safety:* I see no evidence that expanded front yard parking for an expanded elementary school will substantively impact public health or safety in an adverse manner.

20. *Sec. 4 (6) (6) Consistent with good planning practice:* Elementary schools are allowed by right in single family residential neighborhoods in Ballwin. Parking in the front yards of such schools is common practice. **There is little evidence to support an argument that that front yard parking at this location is not consistent with good planning as it is practiced in Ballwin.**

21. *Sec. 4 (6) (7) Operated in a manner that is compatible with permitted uses in the district:* This school has operated at this location for over 40 years with little evidence of an incompatibility with the surrounding residential properties. **I can see no basis to support a negative finding relative to this petition.**

22. *Sec. 4(6) (8) Operated in a manner that is visually compatible with the permitted uses in the surrounding area.* This is primarily an issue of the proximity to single family residential uses. The look of an elementary school's architecture and site improvements is certainly different than that of a typical single family residential lot. Looking different does not necessarily mean that uses are not visually compatible. Again, schools are routinely built and operated in such neighborhoods and there does not appear to be any substantial problem with visual compatibility. Single family residential properties adjoining schools in Ballwin do not appear to go undeveloped, be of less value or be poorly maintained when compared to similar properties not adjacent to schools. The new parking lot will be built in substantially the same location as the existing parking lot. Clearly, elementary schools in residential locations have historically been viewed as visually compatible with surrounding uses.

Planning Concerns:

Future Land use Categories:

1. The Future Land Use and Transportation Map provisions of the 2007 Comprehensive Community Plan recommend that this site be utilized as institutional. This recommendation has been met with this petition and associated use.
2. This development is in compliance with the institutional site development guidelines of the Ballwin 2007 Comprehensive Community Plan (page 8:10).

Thomas H. Aiken, AICP
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