VERDE DESIGN

2455 The Alameda, Suite 200
Santa Clara, CA 95050
t 408.985.7200 f 408.985.7260
www.verdedesigninc.com

August 3, 2007

Mr. Jeff Bond, Planning and Building Manager
Mr. Ed Phillips, Staff Consultant
City of Albany
1000 San Pablo Avenue
Albany, CA 94706

RE: **Saint Mary's College High School**
Revisions to Track and Field Improvements Project
(Supersedes letter dated March 16, 2007)

Dear Mr. Bond and Mr. Phillips:

In light of the May 22nd Planning and Zoning Commission Hearing, neighbor comments, and subsequent discussions between the City and Saint Mary's College High School, we propose the following modifications to our submittal:

Posen Avenue Streetscape / Landscaping: The wall in the original proposal shall be deleted. We propose to replace the existing chain–link fence with a low curb (min 6-inch to max 2 foot height), to carry the sloping sidewalk grades, for a level, stepped six foot tall ornamental iron fence in the location of the existing fence line. The existing grades on the slope will be maintained.

The wall in the original proposal also served as a retaining wall; deletion of the wall will result in an approximate net increase of 920 cubic yards of dirt off-haul, or roughly 75 additional end dump truck loads. The off-haul in the original proposal was approximately 5500 cubic yards (the rough equivalent of 460 end dump truck loads); with the additional off-haul, the total will be 6,420 cubic yards, or 535 truck loads.

The landscaping concept will keep the proposed 20 foot spacing of the street trees. As requested by neighbors and suggested by Commissioners, in order to provide more transparency through the site for neighbors across Posen Avenue, the spacing of trees along the slope will be increased from 20 foot to 40 foot on center. In addition, also for more transparency, two to four foot tall shrubs with ground cover will be planted on the slope. Low maintenance ground cover plant material will also be planted in the area between the sidewalk and the new fence. The Posen Avenue landscape design will utilize "green", water efficient new plant materials. Landscaping will have an irrigation system. It is proposed that new trees be planted to screen the corner of the gymnasium/auditorium building.

This planting concept is contingent on the removal of all existing Eucalyptus trees along Posen Avenue. Keeping these trees would severely inhibit the successful development of new plant material, and fails to remedy the safety and cleanliness concerns relating to these trees.

Bleacher Replacement: The P&Z Commission objected to the screening of the rear of the bleacher with ivy and other plant material. The planted screening lattice behind the bleacher is no longer a part of the project. To provide transparency, an open type of bleacher structure, with 4" maximum horizontal openings in the vertical risers, is proposed. Please note that with the increased transparency of the bleacher comes added debris beneath the bleachers due to cups, wrappers, etc. being

ATTACHMENT: C

discarded beneath the bleacher during events. However, this condition is no different than what exists now with the current bleachers, and School maintenance staff cleans the slope of debris after events. To facilitate cleaning of the slope and maintenance of the new slope planting, a maintenance pathway consisting of stepping stones bedded in gravel will be provided along the slope.

Storage Building: At the suggestion of City staff, the finishes of the proposed storage building will be stucco (or simulated stucco) wall finish and tile roof to match other buildings on campus. Alternatives to institutional roll-up doors will be considered, though the doors will not be prominently visible from the street.

It should be noted that the storage building location was changed after a review of view corridors and sightlines with neighbors.

Drainage Impacts: The County C.3 requirements would apply to this project as we are replacing over 10,000 s.f. of impervious surfaces (the track is greater than this amount) requiring City review of increase to storm water runoff and water quality. It is intended that our project will comply; it does control, as part of its design, the storm water outfall such that its rate of discharge from the improvements will be reduced from its current level (both during rain events and typical day to day flow rates due to the field not requiring irrigation).

It should also be noted that the storm water that leaves the site will be less contaminated due to the removal of the natural turf field, with the elimination of the need for fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides, etc. The synthetic turf field design also acts as a large filtration system as the storm water needs to go through a silica sand and cryogenic rubber layer, a porous membrane, and a graded rock section, prior to entering the drainage piping system.

In addition, there should be no measurable increase in volume or velocity of runoff along the Posen Avenue streetscape as the slope will remain as it currently exists; additionally there will be more plant material to retain groundwater. It should be noted that there are pending City improvements for the City storm drainage system; the school contributed to the City project as a condition of prior project approvals.

Increase to Height of Netting: Neighbors at the site meeting indicated that the netting at the current height is effective and objected to the proposed increase in height. The existing netting height will be unchanged, no increase is proposed.

As part of these design changes, a new series of graphics has been developed to provide a representation of what the modified design will become, including time elapsed sketches for the Posen Avenue plant material. The type and number of graphics are provided in response to comments in the February 2007 and May 2007 Planning and Zoning Commission hearings and as per our discussions with City staff. If you have any questions, please contact me at (408) 850-3420. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Verde Design, Inc.

Devin Conway, PE
Principal

cc: James Moore, Robert A. Bothman, Inc
Hal Brandes; Dahanukar Brandes Architects
Brother Edmond Larouche, Saint Mary's College High School