

**CITY OF ALBANY  
PLANNING AND ZONING AGENDA  
STAFF REPORT**

Agenda date: 9/27/11  
Prepared by: ALH

**ITEM/SUBJECT:** 6F

**St. Mary's College High School**

The applicant is seeking preliminary review for a modification to their existing use permit. Proposed physical changes include seismic upgrades, design review for a new music building and chapel, and a new drainage plan. Additionally, the current use permit will be amended to reflect operating standards. No action will be taken on this item as this is merely an update of the City's review process including CEQA review (California Environmental Quality Act).

**SITE:** 1600 Posen St.

**APPLICANT/OWNER:** Vivian Kahn for St. Mary's College High School

**ZONING:** PF-Public Facilities

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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Planning and Zoning Commission review the revised project scope and provide feedback to the applicant. As part of this study session and cursory review, the Planning & Zoning Commission may also make recommendations for additional material and exhibits to be submitted as part of application completeness. Requiring any additional application contents will help the Commission make a thoroughly informed decision.

**BACKGROUND/PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

St. Mary's College High School (SMCHS) is a co-educational high school with 630 students on a 12.5 acre site at the most southeastern portion in City of Albany, sharing a limitline with the City of Berkeley. The School has had multiple proposals in recent years with for campus facility expansion plans and use permit amendments. Several Planning & Zoning Commission study sessions have been held, though no formal action has occurred since 2007. At that time, the Commission approved the field renovation project. The most recent review by the Planning & Zoning Commission was conducted on March 9, 2010. The current proposal has been modified and scaled back in scope.

Due to extensive history with the school and the use permit review process, a summary of the review and actions from the past five years is included below.

## 2006-2007

In 2006, the applicant submitted two (2) separate applications, PA 06-091 Field Renovation Project and PA 06-053 Campus Conditional Use Permit. At that time, a campus expansion was planned as well modifications to the use permit. This included plans for a field renovation project that encompassed new bleacher installation, a new storage building, street frontage plantings, and new fencing. A Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) was approved for the project on September 25, 2007. The Field Renovation Design Review request (PA 06-091) was approved by the Planning & Zoning Commission in October 2007. The field renovation and related landscaping were completed in 2008.

## 2008

The City prepared a separate MND in 2008 to address impacts related a new Conditional Use Permit (CUP) Master Plan Amendment. A study session was held on December 8, 2008 to receive comments on the Draft MND. Comments were received though final action never occurred for the MND or the project proposal. At that time, the following new construction was proposed:

- A new multi-use building
- A new classroom building
- Athletic training and weight room facilities
- A new campus chapel
- A new music building
- A 14,000 sq. ft. addition to St. Joseph's Hall
- A 2,500 sq. ft. addition to the Brothers' Residence on campus
- A new kitchen to be constructed at the student center
- A new drainage plan

## 2010

The applicant submitted a revised Master Plan Use Permit application in 2010 for an update to the CUP. This application request was presented to the Planning & Zoning Commission as part of study session on March 9, 2010. At that time, additional issues involving the use permit were identified including:

- Football playoff games
- Baseball Field Netting
- Landscaping Maintenance
- Mediation between the surrounding residents and the school
- Construction of a new music building

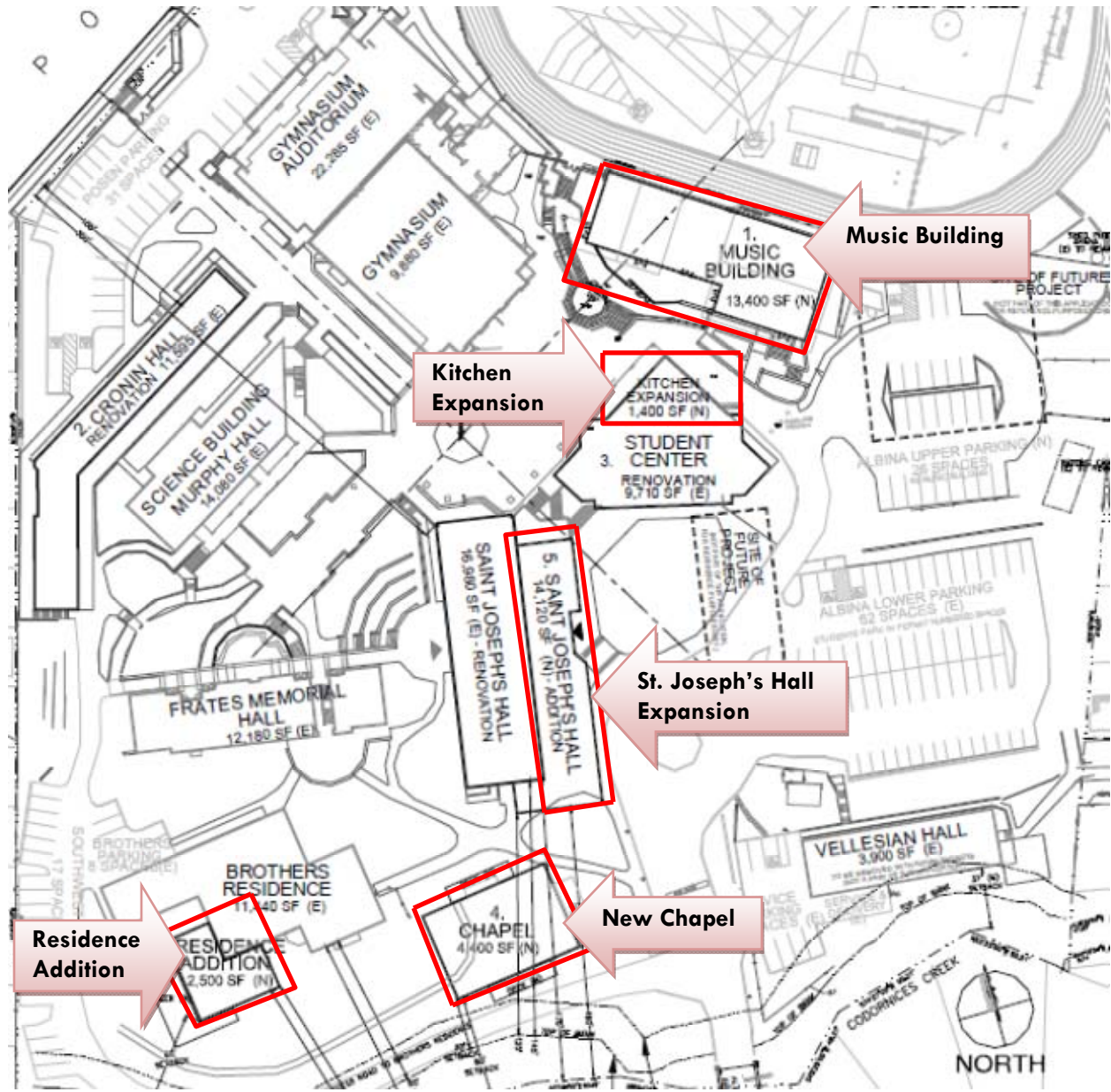
No action was taken, the information was merely received. Mediation was scheduled to occur between school representatives and residents, though the mediator subsequently withdrew due to extenuating circumstances.

Current Proposal: September 2011

The present proposal has been modified in scale and scope from the prior submittal. It includes the following:

- A new 4,400 sq. ft. single-story campus chapel
- A new 13,400 sq. ft. single-story music building with partial basement
- A 14,000 sq. ft. addition to St. Joseph's Hall
- A 2,500 sq. ft. addition to the Brothers' Residence on campus
- A 1,400 sq. ft. new kitchen to be constructed at the student center
- Renovation of Cronin Hall including a classroom conversion of existing space
- A new drainage plan

The previously proposed multi-use building, classroom building, and athletic training and weight room facilities from 2008 have been omitted from the latest submittal. The total area proposed to be added is 35,700 sq. ft. Figure 1 shows the most recent site plan with proposed building additions highlighted in red.



**Figure 1. Site Plan with Proposed New Construction**

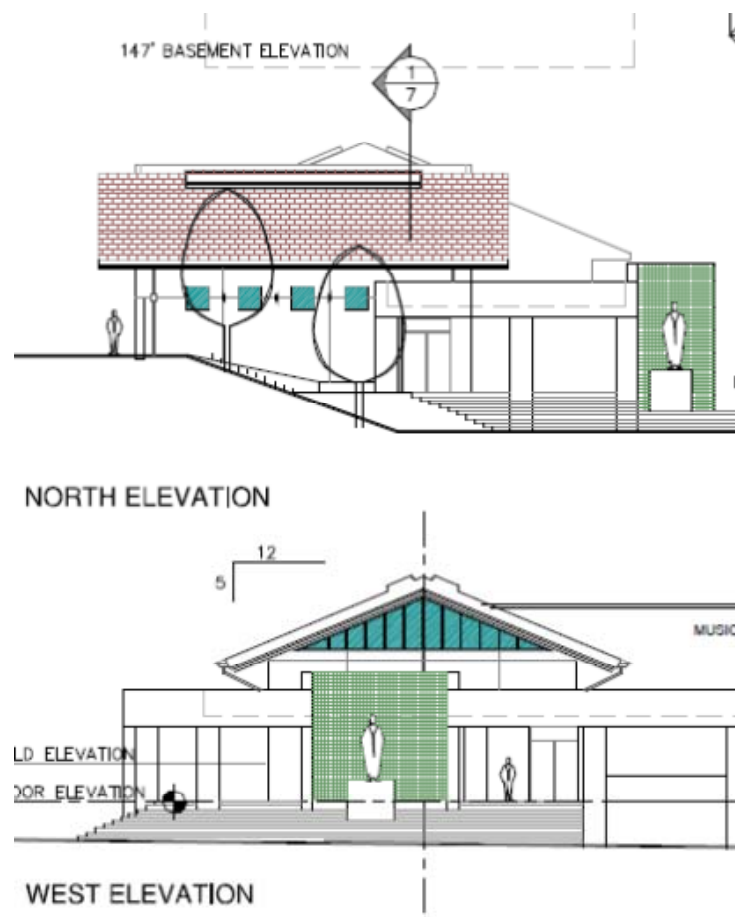
Conditional Use Permit

The existing Conditional Use Permit will be amended entirely to reflect the latest school operating standards. It will supersede CUP 93-27 and will serve as the most current operating document. The new use permit will include some of the provisions of original use permit and will also include operating provisions based on the 2007 field expansion as well as the most recent campus expansion.

## Design Review

A separate Design Review application request will be submitted to the City for the proposed building additions and new construction. This submittal will occur once the Initial Study is updated and formally adopted by the Planning & Zoning Commission. At that future date, the Commission will review the proposed architecture for the music building, chapel, and other building additions.

Preliminary Design Review plans for the music building were submitted to the City. The building is proposed to be 13,400 sq. ft. in area and 30 ft. in height. The preliminary plans are included as Attachment 1b to this report. As part of the cursory review, the Commission may make design recommendations to the applicant. A detail of the north and west elevations is included below for reference to provide an idea of the scale and design.



**Figure 2. Preliminary Elevation: St. Mary's Music Building**

## **NEXT STEPS**

### **Environmental Analysis**

A Draft MND was prepared in 2008 based on project scope proposed at that time. The document was never approved but still encompasses changes currently proposed. Due to the changes in the current scope as well as regulatory changes by the State of California and the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD), the document will need to be updated. Staff has engaged Lamphier-Gregory, the consultant who prepared the original document in 2008, to update the Initial Study reflecting the new project scope and regulatory changes.

### **Future Review**

Once the Initial Study is updated and the environmental document is complete and circulated for public comment, it will be publicly noticed and agendized for a future Planning & Zoning Commission hearing. The Conditional Use Permit will be reviewed concurrently with the document and action can be taken on both items at the same meeting. Given the revisions necessary for a complete updated environmental document, it is expected that the update will be completed in 2-3 months. Additionally, the document will need to be released for public comment pursuant to Section 15073 of the California Environmental Quality Act. It is expected that formal Commission review will not occur for at least 4-5 months.

As part of this study session, the Planning & Zoning Commission may request additional information from the applicant as part of application completeness.

### **Site Tour**

A site tour involving school representatives, project representatives, City staff, and the Planning & Zoning Commission is scheduled for Tuesday October 11, 2011 at 6 pm. All attendees will walk the site with the proposed plans to better assess the scale and scope of the proposed campus changes.

### **Attachments:**

1. Revised Project Plans
  - a. Conditional Use Permit Plans
  - b. Design Review-Music Building
2. Application
3. List of questions/concerns submitted by neighbors