

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES OF JUNE 13, 2011

2011-7231- Challenger School [Applicant] **Sunnyvale School District** [Owner]:

Use Permit to allow the expansion of an existing private school (Challenger Elementary School) including four new classrooms located at **1185 Hollenbeck Avenue**. RK

Vice Chair Hendricks commented that he lives near the school, however he is outside the 500-foot zone requirement. He said he is an alumni of this school when it was a public school.

Trudi Ryan, Planning Officer, presented the staff report. She said staff recommends approval of the project subject to the conditions.

Vice Chair Hendricks referred to page 7 of the report and discussed with staff references to “peak hour trips” and “additional traffic.” **Trudi Ryan**, Planning Officer, said there is no additional traffic during peak hours as the school’s peak hour is around 3 p.m.

Comm. Larsson said some of the project parking appears to be on a public street. Ms. Ryan said the portion of the Torrington Drive on the project site is private property.

Chair Travis opened the public hearing.

Fred Healey, Director of Development for Challenger School, said that they have been working on this plan for about a year. He discussed traffic efforts, parking, and landscaping. He said that most of the proposed classrooms are for preschool classes and children will arrive later and leave earlier than the non-preschool students. Mr. Healey said the architect, Hanh Nguyen, the Director of the California Region, and Aaron Shiftner, Director of the School, are available to answer questions.

Comm. Hungerford discussed with Mr. Healey the State standards for portable buildings. Mr. Healey explained the approval process for development and said Challenger is subject to the same DSA (Division of the State Architect) standards as public schools. He said the standard life of a portable is about 40 years.

Vice Chair Hendricks confirmed with Mr. Healey that the proposed additions are called “modular” buildings. Vice Chair Hendricks asked about the projected student population over the next 5 to 10 years. Mr. Healey said this will probably be the last time Challenger will request to add to this site as there is no more space for expansion.

Comm. Sulser discussed the site plans with Mr. Healey expressing concern that the modulars are too close to the driveway and the entrance to the school.

Vice Chair Hendricks discussed the site plans with Mr. Healey.

Chair Travis closed the public hearing.

Comm. Hungerford moved for **Alternative 1** to approve the **Use Permit with attached conditions**. **Comm. Dohadwala** seconded the motion.

Comm. Hungerford said he questioned the addition of the modular units, however he sees this as an economic way to add additional classrooms. He said he is comfortable with the modular units for a school, subject to the conditions, which make the units more visually appealing.

Comm. Dohadwala said she agrees with what **Comm. Hungerford** said and can support the motion because this is a school, rather than a commercial site. She said she is bothered that these units look somewhat temporary adding that she does not like chain link fences either as they look temporary. She said she would like to see more permanent looking buildings and fences used in our schools.

Vice Chair Hendricks said he can make the findings and said there is a difference between portable and modular buildings. He commented that the chain link fence is already in place. He said he thinks these are well thought-out plans, that the project is consistent with property and other schools in Sunnyvale, and that he hopes the project works out well for the applicant.

Comm. Sulser said he would be supporting the motion as he can make the findings. He said he was nervous about the placement of the modular buildings being close to the front door. He said after studying the plans he is more comfortable with the project.

Comm. Chang said he would be supporting motion. He thanked the applicant for making changes to the plans based on the neighbor's concerns. He said this should be a successful project and that the conditions address his concerns about the modular buildings.

ACTION: Comm. Hungerford made a motion on 2011-7231 to approve the **Use Permit with attached conditions**. **Comm. Dohadwala** seconded. Motion carried 7-0.

APPEAL OPTIONS: This action is final unless appealed to City Council no later than June 28, 2011.