

# ATTACHMENT E

## ZONING ADMINISTRATOR ADJUSTMENT ADDITIONAL INFORMATION/FINDINGS

### CHAMINADE COLLEGE PREPARATORY, HIGH SCHOOL

MAIN CAMPUS: 7500 CHAMINADE AVENUE, 23241 COHASSET STREET & 23260 SATICOY STREET  
NORTH CAMPUS: 23217-23255 SATICOY STREET & 7619-7629 WOODLAKE AVENUE

#### PROJECT OVERVIEW/REQUEST

The Owner and Applicant, Chaminade College Preparatory (the “Applicant” or “Chaminade”), proposes to update and expand the existing Chaminade College Preparatory, High School campus (the “High School”), approved and currently operating under a Conditional Use Permit (“CUP”), under City Planning Case No. CPC-2009-1477-CU-ZV-ZAA-SPR, with a revised campus plan located at 7500 Chaminade Avenue, 23241 Cohasset Street, 23260 Saticoy Street, 23217-23255 Saticoy Street and 7619-7629 Woodlake Avenue in West Hills (the “Subject Property”). The revised campus plan (the “Project”) will include a total lot area of approximately 25.86 acres, inclusive of: 1) a new three-story school building (“Multistory Building”), updated parking areas, remodeled athletic fields, new student quads, and renovated classrooms, student service centers and offices on the existing campus located on approximately 21.03 acres in the A1-1 and RS-1 Zones, at 7500 Chaminade Avenue, 23241 Cohasset Street and 23260 Saticoy Street (“Main Campus”), 2) an expanded school campus area of approximately 4.83 acres located across Saticoy Street, at 23217-23255 Saticoy Street and 7619-7629 Woodlake Avenue, proposed for new athletic fields, an aquatic center/outdoor swimming pool, and accessory facilities/structures and associated surface parking facilities, in the proposed C2-1 Zone<sup>1</sup> (the new “North Campus”), and 3) a new pedestrian bridge across Saticoy Street (“pedestrian bridge”). No increase in the maximum permitted student enrollment (1,360 students) is proposed. Upon Project completion, the revised campus plan for the High School will include a total of approximately 193,818 square feet of Floor Area and approximately 501 on-site surface parking spaces.

The Applicant requests the following discretionary approvals:

- A **ZONING ADMINISTRATOR ADJUSTMENT**, pursuant to Los Angeles Municipal Code (“LAMC”) Section 12.28 A, to allow for the following:
  - a. Construction of a three-story, approximately 48-foot tall school building (Multistory Building) on the Main Campus, in lieu of the 45-foot tall structures permitted in the A1-1 Zone per LAMC Section 12.21.1.

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<sup>1</sup> Existing zones (for the North Campus) are [Q]C1-1VL and P-1VL

- b. On the Main Campus, encroachment of a proposed above-grade pedestrian bridge and associated support structures into the required front and side yard setbacks in the RS and A1 Zones on the west side of Saticoy Street, and reduced setbacks along Cohasset Street (front yard) and along the eastern property lines (side yards) in the A1 Zone for existing encroaching structures (bleachers and buildings) to remain, in lieu of the setbacks required per LAMC Sections 12.07.1 C and 12.05 C.

Additionally, the Applicant is concurrently requesting a **VESTING ZONE CHANGE AND HEIGHT DISTRICT CHANGE** on the North Campus (See “Attachment C”), a **PLAN APPROVAL** (See “Attachments D and D.1”), **ZONING ADMINISTRATOR DETERMINATIONS** related to Transitional Height and fences/gates (See “Attachment F”), and a **VESTING TENTATIVE TRACT MAP** for the merger and re-subdivision of the Subject Property (See “Attachment G”).

### **JUSTIFICATIONS / FINDINGS**

The following findings have been developed pursuant to LAMC Section 12.28.C.4 and Form CP-7781 zaa [revised 6/9/2015 – Findings / Specialized Requirements: Zoning Administrator Adjustment (ZAA):

- 1. That while site characteristics or existing improvements make strict adherence to the zoning regulations impractical or infeasible, the project nonetheless conforms with the intent of those regulations.**

The Project is proposed to upgrade and modernize an existing private high school that was established on the Subject Property’s Main Campus in the 1960s, with additional academic, classroom, administrative, counseling, library, and student quad facilities on the Main Campus, additional athletic and parking facilities on the new North Campus, and a pedestrian bridge to connect the two campuses and allow for safe pedestrian street crossing, all of which are necessary to serve the existing student population. The Project involves the instant request for a Zoning Administrator Adjustment to allow for the construction of a 48-foot tall Multistory Building on the Main Campus, in lieu of the 45-foot tall structures permitted in the A1-1 Zone, and to allow for the proposed pedestrian bridge (and associated support structures) and existing structures on the Main Campus to encroach into required yards in the A1 and RS Zones.

The proposed 48-foot tall Multistory Building will be located along the northern portion of the Main Campus, adjacent to the existing performing arts building and football field and will include approximately 60,760 square feet of new Floor Area. The front yard setback along Cohasset Street currently includes bleachers adjacent to the existing baseball field for spectators and the side yard setback along the eastern property line currently includes existing offices, maintenance buildings and the Condon Family Center for Science and Technology building. As identified in LAMC Section 12.28 A, the Zoning Administrator shall have the authority to grant adjustments for the yard, area, building line and height requirements. As identified below, the requested deviations for height and setbacks conform with the intent of the zoning regulations.

## **ATTACHMENT E – Zoning Administrator Adjustment Findings**

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As identified above, the provisions of the A1-1 Zone limit height on the Subject Property to 45 feet. The intent of this regulation, however, is to ensure that structures within the Subject Property are compatible with adjoining properties. The Main Campus is surrounded by single-family residential neighborhoods and as such, the height regulations will continue to protect the existing neighborhood from out of scale development. The Project includes the request for a deviation from the currently permitted height of 45-feet for the construction, use and maintenance of a 48-foot Multistory Building. As such, the request includes a height increase of 3 feet, which represents a minor increase of approximately 6 percent. As identified in LAMC Section 12.28 A, an adjustment shall not be permitted if the request represents an increase of 20 percent or more than what is otherwise permitted by the Code. Therefore, the proposed 6 percent height increase from 45 feet to 48 feet is permitted through the request of a Zoning Administrator Adjustment. The construction of the Multistory Building will not introduce a new use within the Subject Property, but rather develop a building in keeping with the surrounding educational facilities currently existing on-site. Furthermore, the proposed Multistory Building will be buffered within the interior of the northern portion of the Subject Property, surrounded by adjacent multi-story buildings on the Main Campus, like the existing Performing Arts Building currently at a height of 60 feet, which is the tallest building on campus, and the Condon Center for Science and Technology at a height of 50 feet. The Multistory Building will not be located against the adjoining single-family residential neighborhoods. As such, the requested increase in height to 48 feet, if approved, would allow for the development of a new Multistory Building that is lower in height than existing structures located on the Main Campus and will continue to be compatible with the surrounding uses.

The Project is also requesting encroachments into required yards on the Main Campus, along the west side of Saticoy Street for the new pedestrian bridge, and along the front yard setback along Cohasset Street and along the easterly side yard for existing structures to remain. Strict adherence to the setback regulations for pedestrian bridge would be infeasible, as the proposed encroachment of the pedestrian bridge into the required yards is necessary for the safety of student, visitors, faculty and staff when crossing the street between the Main and North Campuses. In addition, as shown on the proposed revised campus plan, the Main Campus currently includes existing bleachers within the Cohasset Street yard, and existing offices, maintenance buildings, and the Condon Center for Science and Technology within eastern property line side yard. As such, the instant request is to allow for the continued use and maintenance of these existing structures, as they continue to operate on the Main Campus, and will not result in any new or visual obstruction to the surrounding community. Many of these structures have been located on the Main Campus for several decades, prior to the establishment of the current A1-1 zoning provisions and prior to the approval of the current CUP.

In this instance, the strict application of the zoning regulations is impractical and infeasible, as requiring compliance with the minimum setbacks would prevent the construction of the pedestrian bridge that is necessary for safety and would result in the demolition of all existing and actively operating structures within the front and side yard setbacks, all of which currently provide, or will provide, an essential function to the operations of the school.

Therefore, the requested slight increase in height for the proposed Multistory Building and the requested encroachments into the required yards to allow for the construction of the new pedestrian bridge and to allow for existing encroaching structures to remain are necessary. The strict adherence of the zoning regulations would result in impractical and infeasible requirements which would hinder the operations of the existing High School, for the reasons as mentioned above.

**2. That in light of the project as a whole, including any mitigation measures imposed, the project’s location, size, height, operations and other significant features will be compatible with and will not adversely affect or further degrade adjacent properties, the surrounding neighborhood, or the public health, welfare, and safety.**

As referenced above, the Project involves the request for a Zoning Administrator Adjustment to allow for the construction of a 48-foot tall Multistory Building on the Main Campus, in lieu of the 45-foot tall structures permitted in the A1-1 Zone, and encroachments into required setbacks for the new pedestrian bridge and structures that have remained on the Main Campus for years and will continue to remain, such as existing bleachers and existing buildings. In addition to the instant request, Chaminade is requesting to upgrade, modernize and expand the existing campus to provide for additional classrooms, a new campus entrance from Saticoy Street, the development of new athletic fields and facilities, and the construction of a new pedestrian bridge on Saticoy Street to connect the Main and North Campuses as a function for safer pedestrian crossing. These upgrades will allow Chaminade to remain competitive with similar parochial and private academic institutions in the West San Fernando Valley.

Relative to the Multistory Building and its location, size, height, and operations, the development will occur on the Main Campus which has operated as a school use since the early 1960s. The proposed construction will not result in a new use on the Subject Property, but rather develop a use in keeping with the educational intent of the existing school campus and therefore will not adversely affect or further degrade adjacent properties, the surrounding neighborhood, or the public health, welfare, and safety. In addition, the development of the proposed Multistory Building will improve public welfare as it will provide for additional academic facilities for improved and expanded educational resources for students. As mentioned in Finding No. 1, the proposed Multistory Building will be buffered within the interior of the northern portion of the North Campus, surrounded by adjacent multi-story buildings on the Main Campus, that of which have been operating since the early 1960s, and will not be located against the adjoining single-family residential neighborhoods.

With respect to the construction of the new pedestrian bridge, it is proposed to reach a maximum height of 30 feet, with the top of the elevator tower proposed on the north side of Saticoy Street reaching a maximum height of 45 feet. Minimum clearance under the pedestrian bridge will be per required city codes and will not interfere with the public use of Saticoy Street. The pedestrian bridge will be enclosed with open air metal panels to also ensure safety of pedestrians while crossing. The pedestrian bridge is necessary to ensure public health, welfare and safety for students, visitors, faculty, and staff when crossing the street. As for the location, size, and height of the encroaching existing structures to remain within the required setbacks

along Cohasset Street and along the easterly property lines, as mentioned in Finding No. 1, the bleachers, offices, maintenance buildings and the Condon Family Center for Science and Technology currently exist on the Main Campus today and have been for decades. While all these structures are proposed to remain, the buildings located at the southeast corner of the Main Campus will be renovated in order to provide for additional administrative offices. The location, size, height, and operation of these structures will continue to be compatible with and will not adversely affect or further degrade adjacent properties, the surrounding neighborhood, or the public health, welfare, and safety as the uses are proposed to remain and will continue operating in a manner since they were originally constructed. Allowing these structures to remain will not result in any new structures, uses or operations, and the approval of the instant request will not result in any new detrimental effects on views of adjoining residents.

In addition, a Mitigated Negative Declaration is being prepared for the Project as a whole, which will impose mitigation measures to mitigate any environmental impacts to less-than-significant levels. This will ensure that the Project will not negatively impact any adjoining single-family residential properties, as well as not impact the overall public health, welfare and safety. For all the reasons mentioned above, the development of the proposed Multistory Building at a maximum height of 48 feet and allowing new and existing structures to be constructed and remain within the required yards, respectively, will not adversely affect or further degrade adjacent properties, the surrounding neighborhood, or the public health, welfare and safety.

**3. That the project is in substantial conformance with the purposes, intent and provisions of the General Plan, the applicable community plan and any applicable specific plan.**

The instant requests are part of the larger, overall Project which involves the continued operation, modernization and expansion of the existing private high school. The Project involves the construction of the Multistory Building with administrative, counseling, library, classroom, laboratory, and multipurpose uses. The Project also involves a new outdoor student quad for additional outdoor space and space for outdoor instruction on the Main Campus, additional athletic and parking facilities on the new North Campus, and a new pedestrian bridge to connect the two campuses and allow for safe street crossing for students, visitors, faculty, and staff. The elements of the Project are vital to the educational, social, and athletic advancement of Chaminade students.

The Project and instant requests are in substantial conformance with the purposes, intent and provisions of the General Plan and the Canoga Park-Winnetka-Woodland Hills-West Hills Community Plan (“Community Plan”), as the Project proposes a use that addresses the issues and meets the objectives summarized in the Community Plan and General Plan Framework Element, as discussed below. The Subject Property is not located in a specific plan area.

Community Plan

While the Community Plan does not address the placement or conditioning of schools, a school use is generally considered by the City as a benefit to the local community and, as such, is

deemed by City and State law as an appropriate use where it has been properly sited and conditioned. The surrounding land uses have not changed and the High School will continue to operate consistent with the conditions of approval (other than those for which modification is being sought with the instant application). Furthermore, the proposed expansion with the North Campus will be similarly conditioned to ensure use and operation is compatible with and respectful of surrounding land uses.

The Community Plan, however, does make mention of the continuing need "to modernize public facilities, improve services, and accommodate changes". (Page III-10) In keeping with the Community Plan and the need to accommodate changes, the Project is intended to and will modernize the existing school facilities and improvements on the High School campus. For years, Chaminade has intended to build additional and much-needed facilities for its students and families. The expanded facilities will serve the current and permitted student population, again as always intended. Furthermore, while the Community Plan does not specifically address private schools (K-12), these schools are essential alternatives to overcrowded and underfunded public schools. The public school district counts on private schools to take a share of students; otherwise, their overcrowded schools would be worse off.

Additionally, the Community Plan seeks to "use the location, characteristics, and timing of public facility and utility development as a tool in achieving planned land use patterns." (Page III-10) The Project, although not involving a public facility, allows the expansion of an existing private school in a residential neighborhood, following and keeping with the current land use pattern while expanding athletic and parking facilities. In addition, although the Project does not involve a public facility or use, Chaminade does currently allow the community to utilize the High School campus, providing benefits to the surrounding community. Chaminade also intends to allow other schools and members of the local community to use the new athletic facilities on the new North Campus, to provide a service that is needed as well in demand in the area such as a swimming pool. In addition, the Community Plan states, as part of the discussion of "Community Issues and Opportunities", that the "[a]ddition, expansion and/or improvement of needed local parks throughout the Community should be accelerated, where feasible." (Page I-6) While the Project will not provide a park use it does introduce a new athletic/recreational use for an existing high school, which serves as a parks, sports, and recreational function, that encourages health and fitness for students and other users of the fields and pool.

The Project also addresses the following relevant issues and opportunities identified for commercial land uses on Page I-4 of the Community Plan, as it replaces a retail mini shopping center with thoughtfully designed open space and athletic fields and facilities that will provide an adequate transition between the residential uses to the north and the existing campus (Main Campus) to the south:

***Issues***

- *Oversupply and poor appearance of strip mall development and obsolete commercial space on major thoroughfares.*
  
- *Inadequate transition between commercial and residential uses.*

***Opportunities***

- *Establish appropriate transition between commercial (mixed use) and adjoining primarily residential uses.*

In addition, the Project supports the following Residential and Commercial Objectives and Policies of the Community Plan:

***Objective 1-3*** *Preserve and enhance the character and integrity of existing single and multifamily neighborhoods.*

***Objective 2-2*** *Enhance the appearance of commercial districts*

***Policies***

***2-2.1*** *Require that any proposed development be designed to enhance and be compatible with adjacent development.*

***2-2.3*** *Preserve community character, scale and architectural diversity.*

***2-2.4*** *Improve safety and aesthetics of parking areas in commercial areas.*

The outdoor athletic fields and facilities proposed on the North Campus will complement the surrounding land uses, which include single-family residential homes. The proposed uses will serve as a buffer between single-family residential uses and the commercial corridor (Saticoy Street). The proposed Project seeks to re-zone a commercially-used property (the North Campus) to allow Chaminade to expand their athletic facilities without removing residential dwelling units or dividing a residential neighborhood. The existing land use designation allows for the existing commercial retail shopping center, which acts as a buffer between the single-family residential neighborhood to the north and Saticoy Street, a commercial corridor, to the south. However, the commercial land use designation in this instance will allow for expanded athletic facilities proposed by Chaminade, an existing and well-established fixture in the immediate community, to also act as a buffer between the residential neighborhood and commercial corridor, without introducing the negative effects that a typical or more intense commercial use might bring. Further, the proposed new pedestrian bridge across Saticoy Street will enhance and improve pedestrian safety and accessibility between the existing and new campus.

General Plan Framework Element

The proposed Project also meets the following policies and objective of the General Plan Framework Element:

***Policy 6.1.1:*** *Explore creative alternatives for providing new school sites in the City, where appropriate.*

**Objective 6-2** *Maximize the use of local schools for community use and local open space and parks for school use.*

**Policy 6-2.1:** *Encourage the siting of community facilities (libraries, parks, schools and auditoriums) together.*

Chaminade has the opportunity to expand the school facilities to a property located across the street in order to provide additional recreational and athletic programming opportunities and options for its students. Chaminade proposes to maximize on this opportunity by appropriately locating a new campus (the North Campus) near the existing campus. The Main Campus is also located in very close proximity to Four Oaks Park, which is located across Cohasset Street, to the south. The close proximity of the Main Campus to the proposed new North Campus and to Four Oaks Park allows for the Project to implement the objective to site community facilities together. The Project will provide the Chaminade Community and West Hills community with additional recreational/athletic uses near and affiliated with an existing school and public park, consistent with the following policy.

Furthermore, the Framework Element Executive Summary notes:

*The Framework Element's open space and conservation objectives are oriented around the conservation of significant resources, provision of outdoor recreational opportunities, minimization of public risks from environmental hazards, and use of open space to enhance community and neighborhood character.*

It goes on to state the objective to “[p]romote the joint use of open space with public facilities (schools, transit, and other)”. The Project meets the demands and needs of the existing High School and its students, and at the same time will locate additional open space and outdoor athletic facilities, to be associated with and across the street from the existing High School (Main Campus) and Four Oaks Park.

In addition, the Project will further policies of the General Plan Framework Element, including:

**Policy 6-2.1:** *Encourage the siting of community facilities (libraries, parks, schools and auditoriums) together.*

**Policy 6.1.1:** *Explore creative alternatives for providing new school sites in the City, where appropriate.*

Therefore, the Project substantially conforms to the purpose, intent and provisions of the General Plan, including the Framework Element and the Community Plan.

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