



## **Phoenix Country Day School**

Intermediate Special Use Permit Amendment Application

Submitted: November, 2016

**Address:** 3901 East Stanford Drive  
**APN:** 170-09-001A, 170-09-001B  
**Proposal Summary:** Replacing Administration Building

## Background

Phoenix Country Day School (PCDS) was founded in 1961, on its current property at the southwest corner of 40<sup>th</sup> St. and Stanford Drive (Property). Subsequently incorporated into the Town, the first Special Use Permit (SUP) was issued in 1972. Over the years, the Town has granted several amendments to the SUP, as the school has upgraded its facilities and evolved into a distinct model of educational excellence, reflecting the unique culture of the region. Its graduates have advanced to the best universities and become leading citizens who make a positive difference in our nation and all over the world. Recently, an amendment to the SUP (SUP-13-10) included the removal of an aquatic facility where the proposed gymnasium will be built. Most recently, the SUP was further amended to construct a new gymnasium (SUP-14-1).

## Purpose

The primary purpose of this application is to amend the existing SUP to allow for the replacement of the existing administration building with a new administration/welcome center building that will leave a first impression more in keeping with the quality image of PCDS. The current administration building serves the purpose of a welcome center but it is not, to put it bluntly, very welcoming. Families, students, prospective students and visitors in general walk into a very small area with a reception desk and just about enough room for 2 chairs, which are not occupied comfortably if another visitor comes to sign in at reception. To the right and left of this insufficient guest waiting space are doors to the head administrator's offices. There is no privacy, sense of community, comfort or any ability to convey the quality of the educational experience that PCDS presents. The parents want a place to gather, to present a more welcoming environment to visitors, as well as ample offices for the current management and to this end have pledged the money to build this new administration/welcome center.

The building will not be noticeable from off campus but will be a point of pride on campus as it will be the place that everyone passes through upon entering the lower school. We are happy to make this request to complete what will be the last of three phases in the planned capital improvements to PCDS (the pool, the gym and finally this welcome center).

## Intermediate Amendment

This request constitutes an intermediate amendment per Sec. 1102.7.C of the Town's Zoning Ordinance (Ordinance).

1. It does not change or add any uses. PCDS uses the building in the location of the proposed structure as an administrative welcome center building. The new building would not be used for any purpose that the existing is not. It is simply an update and expansion to accommodate sufficient meeting space and offices for existing personnel.

2. The increase of floor area of the project, calculated cumulatively over the last 60 months, is greater than 15 percent of the existing 60 months ago but less than 40 percent. At the time of this request, the increase in floor area over the preceding 60 months is 33.3 percent. This current proposed floor plan would add 7,110 additional square feet or 4 percent, for a total 60-month increase of 37 percent.
3. The request does not have any material effect on the adjoining property owners that is visible, audible or otherwise perceptible from adjacent properties that cannot be sufficiently mitigated. This replacement of the existing administration building with a new structure will be a significant improvement in the appearance of the school's northern elevation. The size, height and design will be in keeping with the rest of the campus, but the building is set back so far from Stanford Drive, that there will be no material effect on adjoining property owners.

### Uses Proposed on the Property

As shown on the Site Plan (Exhibit A) and floor plan (Exhibit B), the use of the Administration/Welcome Center Building will not change. However, the proposed building will be a huge improvement in every way over the existing building. The existing building is 2,700 square feet, which is insufficient for the existing staff who are cramped and lack meeting space. The proposed building will be 9,810 square feet, which will add the much needed meeting space, a greatly improved visitor reception area and increased work space for staff and management.

**Students and Staff.** No classrooms or other dedicated student areas are part of the existing building or proposed for the new. Some staff who are currently scattered around the campus, for lack of room in the existing building, will be moved to this new building, but there are no new staff being hired as a part of this request.

**Height.** The building will be 1-story and well under the guidelines of 30 feet in height at 27 feet. There is a spire proposed that would reach to 35 feet, which is in conformance with the Town's recommended standards for Private Schools. This spire will not have any effect on view corridors for surrounding properties. The proposed building will be all but invisible to Phoenix Bible Church and traffic on Stanford Drive to the north as well as to the residences to the west.

**Setbacks.** The existing building is setback from Stanford Drive by approximately 225 feet. The proposed building will be setback 200 feet. This is still significantly farther than is recommended by the Ordinance (40 feet for streets, 60 feet for residentially zoned property).

**Landscaping.** The new building will also be an opportunity to improve the landscaping in this area. Existing landscaping surrounding the existing building within the footprint of the proposed

building will obviously need to be removed. New landscaping will be installed around the proposed building as shown on a landscaping plan to be submitted with the official submittal.

**Materials.** The building materials, paint colors and textures are being chosen to match and complement the existing adjacent structures, blend the structure into its surroundings and match the look and feel of the overall campus. This will help create the most aesthetically pleasing and harmonious design possible.

**Fencing.** As a part of PCDS's overall plan to secure the campus, fencing will be proposed connecting between the proposed building and building B to the west and building E to the east. This fencing will match that which is used campus-wide in color, design, height and materials.

**Lighting.** A complete lighting plan will be submitted as a part of the official submittal. That plan will include pathway and security lighting as needed to make the surrounding area safe for staff, student and visitor circulation as well as to deter crime. Lighting will be in keeping with existing lighting on the campus.

**Traffic, Parking and Circulation.** Because there are no additional students or staff proposed as a part of this request, and because the proposed building will be located within an existing portion of the campus without encroaching on any parking or drive areas, there will be no impact whatsoever on the traffic, parking or circulation on or near the site. The only effect of this change will be that fewer people will need to be on the west side of the campus that abuts residential uses and zoning, which will be beneficial to those neighbors.

**Signage.** PCDS has wanted, for some time now, to update its signage to provide more aesthetically pleasing, informative and well-designed signage. They now have the funds to make this a possibility and are proposing two new signs as a part of this request and the replacement of one existing sign.

1. The existing sign on the corner of Stanford Drive and 40<sup>th</sup> Street will be replaced with a similarly sized new sign in the same location. Detailed plans for this sign will be submitted with the official application. This sign will be illuminated in conformance with the Town's standards.
2. A new sign will be proposed along Stanford Drive at the main entrance to PCDS and will be illuminated in conformance with the Town's standards.
3. The proposed building will have identification lettering indicating the campus building letter as well as a sign identifying the school. This sign will be illuminated per the Town's standards as well. PCDS is aware of the Town's concerns regarding illuminated signage, particularly for signs above ground level.

### Site Development Phasing

If approved, the proposed improvements would be constructed in one phase with a target opening to coincide with the opening of the 2017/2018 school year.

### Compatibility with Adjoining Properties

The proposed administration building is being designed with compatibility to adjacent properties and the surrounding area in mind. As discussed above, the design incorporates techniques and design choices designed to make the structure entirely compatible with adjoining properties such as the absolute lowest height possible, visually interesting façade, mature and strategically located landscaping, orientation and circulation. Everything from materials, lighting and signage to height, configuration and massing have been considered to ensure that the proposed building will be a benefit to the campus, neighborhood and Town.

### Environmental Impacts

The proposed improvements will have no negative environmental impacts. All applicable Town, County, State, and Federal requirements will be adhered to during construction of the project.

### Conformity with and Deviation from Town Standards and Guidelines

The proposed improvements are in conformance with all of the Town's standards and guidelines. This Amendment to the Special Use Permit Amendment, if granted, will conform to the criteria of the Ordinance.

- a) The school and campus are authorized in the Town's general plan.
- b) The project will not adversely affect adjacent properties or persons.
- c) The amendment will conform to the requirements of the existing use permit.
- d) The amendment will have no impact on traffic, parking or circulation.
- e) The improvements will not increase emissions of odor, dust, gas, noise, vibration, smoke, heat, pollutants or glare beyond the boundaries of the property.
- f) The improvements will be low in scale, appropriate to the use and compatible with the existing campus.

### Ownership, Maintenance, and Management of Common Facilities and Open Space

The entire Property and all buildings are owned and maintained by PCDS including open space, sports fields, parking areas, landscaped areas.

### Conclusion

Phoenix Country Day School is on the perimeter of the Town, a buffer between the large commercial structures in the City of Phoenix, and the surrounding residences, most of which were constructed after the school. Ever since incorporation by the Town, PCDS has been a positive member of the Paradise Valley community, and a good steward of the environment. All previous amendments have involved a large financial commitment by PCDS parents to improve the campus and, therefore, the value of surrounding properties. The current proposed amendment will do the same as well.

# EXHIBIT A



STANFORD DRIVE

37TH PLACE

Phoenix Country Day School





# EXHIBIT B





