

DATE ISSUED: May 5, 2005

REPORT NO. PC-05-146

ATTENTION: **Planning Commission, Agenda of May 12, 2005**

SUBJECT: LA JOLLA COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL, PROJECT NO. 41982,
PROCESS 4

OWNER/

APPLICANT: La Jolla Country Day School (Attachment 12)

SUMMARY

Issue(s): Should the Planning Commission approve Planned Development Permit 214066 and Conditional Use Permit No. 120471 to amend Conditional Use Permit No. 3533 to update the Master Plan for La Jolla Country Day School, allow the demolition of an existing administration building, two existing middle school buildings, and a kindergarten building, as well as the construction of a two building, 40,000 square-foot academic center/library and a new 35,000 square-foot middle school complex?

Staff Recommendation:

1. **CERTIFY** Negative Declaration No. 41982
2. **APPROVE** Planned Development Permit No. 214066 and Conditional Use Permit No. 120471

Community Planning Group Recommendation: On October 12, 2004 the University Community Planning Group unanimously voted to recommend approval of the project without conditions.

Environmental Review: A Negative Declaration No. 41982, has been prepared for the project in accordance with State of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines.

Fiscal Impact Statement: All costs associated with the processing of this project are

paid from a deposit account maintained by the applicant.

Code Enforcement Impact: None with this action

Housing Impact Statement: The proposed project would have a neutral impact on housing. The zone for this site is a single family residential zone; however, the University Community Plan (UCP) designates this site for “School” use. The site also falls within the CPIOZ “A” which is used to limit uses and development intensity to the levels specified in the Land Use and Development Intensity Table (Table 3) of the UCP. Table 3 identifies this site for School uses only and would not permit any residential development. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in an increase or decrease in existing or potential housing units.

BACKGROUND

The proposed project site is located at 9490 Genesee Avenue in the RS-1-7 zone, the Parking Impact Overlay Zone (UCSD), and the Community Plan Implementation Overlay Zone (Area A) The site is located south of Genesee Avenue and east of Regents Road within the University Community Plan and is designated for school use

The site currently consists of the following uses:

La Jolla Country Day School Facilities (all figures shown in square feet)	
<i>Description of facility</i>	<i>Existing SF</i>
Early Childhood Center	
1 building with 5 existing classrooms	3,800
Kindergarten	
1 building with 4 existing classrooms	3,846
Lower School	
1 building complex with 17 existing classrooms	12,315
Middle School	
4 buildings with 23 existing classrooms	14,520
Upper School	
4 buildings with 28 existing classrooms plus 7 additional classrooms	26,006
Campus Wide Facilities	
Library, Art building, Food Court, Amphitheater, Administration, Gym, Theater, Portables, Building & Grounds and maintenance facilities	55,912
TOTAL	116,399

The site also contains 287 parking stalls, athletic fields, tennis courts and open space areas (Attachment 1). The triangular site is approximately 23.98 acres and is bound by Genesee Avenue on the northeast side, Regents Road on the west side and Eastgate Mall on the south side of the property (Attachment 2). The site is generally level in topography and can be accessed off all three streets with the main entrance being off Genesee Avenue.

The property across Genesee Avenue to the northeast of the site is zoned RM-3-7 and is developed with apartments. The property across Regents Road is zoned RS-1-7 and is part of the University of California, San Diego (UCSD) Campus. This site is currently part of the UCSD Health Sciences/East Campus. South of the site across Eastgate Mall is an area that is zoned OP-1-1 for Open Space, and is occupied by athletic fields associated with the Jewish Community Center. Moving easterly along Eastgate Mall is a parcel that is zoned RS-1-7 and is occupied by a police and fire station. At the southwest corner of Eastgate Mall and Genesee Avenue is a site that is zoned CO-1-2 and is occupied by an office building.

A Declaration of Restrictions was originally made for the property on January 21, 1957 (Attachment 9). This Declaration of Restrictions allowed for the development of the site with the following uses: research and development, schools, professional and administrative offices, communications office, photographic film process, cartography, general engineering and research engineering offices, or any similar enterprise, business or use. The Declaration of Restrictions had specific conditions for lot size, lot coverage, setbacks, parking, nuisances, height limits, and signs. This Declaration of Restrictions was then amended on September 2, 1960. This amendment allowed for the sale of a portion of the Lands from the City to La Jolla Country Day School and the development of the site as a private school. There have been a total of four amendments to the original Declaration of Restrictions. The most recent of which was made on August 25, 1980. These amendments were made to revise the language and restrictions within the original Declaration of Restrictions and subsequent amendments.

Conditional Use Permit (CUP) No. 3533 was originally approved for the construction and operation of a school by the Planning Commission on December 23, 1960 (Attachment 10). There have been four subsequent amendments to CUP No. 3533 the last being approved by the Planning Commission on June 15, 1978. These amendments allowed for additional uses on the site that were not covered in previous permits including: placement of a fence along the southerly and westerly boundaries of the subject property; baseball, track and football facilities, a science building, school, classroom and auditorium and music facility, and security and maintenance residences.

DISCUSSION

Project Description:

The project proposes to process a Planned Development Permit and a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to amend CUP No. 3533 to update the Master Plan for La Jolla Country Day School. The project also proposes the demolition of an existing administration building, two existing middle school buildings, and a kindergarten building, as well as the construction of a two building, 40,000 square-foot academic center/library and a new 35,000 square-foot middle school complex. The Master Plan update proposes future phased development of the 23.98 acre site with building height deviations. The project would not result in any additional student enrollment over the current allowed maximum enrollment of 1,050 students.

The maximum height on the site would be 60 feet and would be limited to the proposed Academic Center/Library, future Parking Garage, future Theatre, and future Gymnasium. Other facilities on-site would be limited to a height limit of 45 feet

Implementation of the Master Plan consists of three phases: the Initial Phase, the Interim Phase; and the Final Phase. The nature of the development will be dependent upon fundraising objectives and therefore only the initial phase project can be committed to in terms of target dates. At no time during the phased implementation of the building program will the parking supply drop below the minimum requirement of 309 stalls for 1,050 students or 303 stalls for the current enrollment of 1,030 students. Two projects are currently underway on the site, the Upper School Building Addition and the Regents Road Widening. These projects have been approved through other processes at the City of San Diego.

The Initial Phase of the Master Plan, of which development plans have been provided as a part of this project, would consist of the demolition of an existing administration building, two existing middle school buildings, and a kindergarten building, the construction of the Library/Academic Center and the Middle School Campus (Attachment 6). The kindergarten would be located in temporary trailers. This phase would be anticipated to be initiated and/or completed within the first five years.

The Interim Phase of the Master Plan would consist of demolition of six tennis courts, construction of the Kindergarten Building, Parking Structure with tennis courts located on the roof, and construction of a new drop off/parking area along Eastgate Mall. This drop off/parking area would then be the main entrance to the facility. The parking structure would have access off the existing signalized Health Science Drive/Regents Road intersection and would exit back to this intersection and to the north onto Regents Road. This phase would be implemented following the first five-year Initial Phase implementation.

The Final Phase of the Master Plan would consist of new athletic fields, special treatment planting at the corner of Regents Road and Genesee Avenue, construction of an elective center, an Upper School Building, buildings and grounds, a gymnasium, aquatic center, future expansions of existing facilities, and remodeling of the existing gymnasium for Performing Arts functions. This phase would be implemented following the development of the Interim Phase.

Temporary modular classroom buildings would be utilized through the implementation of the Master Plan while new facilities are under construction. Temporary classrooms would not displace the any parking and the required parking stalls would be available during the implementation of the plan.

The following table summarizes the existing facilities on site and the potential future development space with maximum square footage on the site that would result from implementation of the Master Plan:

La Jolla Country Day School Facilities (all figures shown in square feet (SF))				
<i>Description of facility</i>	<i>Existing SF</i>	<i>New SF</i>	<i>Maximum Total SF at Buildout</i>	<i>Description at Buildout</i>
Early Childhood Center				
1 building with 5 existing classrooms	3,800	0	3,800	1 building
Kindergarten				
1 building with 4 existing classrooms	3,846	13,000	13,000	1 building
Lower School				
1 building complex with 17 existing classrooms	12,315	0	12,315	1 building complex
Middle School				
4 buildings with 23 existing classrooms	14,520	35,000	35,000	5 buildings or wings
Upper School				
4 buildings with 28 existing classrooms plus 7 additional classrooms	26,006	18,500	39,400	3 buildings
Campus Wide Facilities				
Library, Art building, Food Court, Amphitheater, Administration, Gym, Theater, Portables, Building & Grounds and maintenance facilities	55,912	133,500	189,412	Library/ Academic Center, Elective Center, Theater, Performing Arts, Gym & Aquatic Center, Buildings & Grounds maintenance, security/maintenance residences, Portables and Academic/support Expansion Space
Totals				
	116,399	200,000	292,927	
	<i>Existing SF</i>	<i>New SF</i>	<i>Total SF at Buildout (excludes parking structure)</i>	

The Master Plan contains design guidelines regarding future development on the site. The Master Plan provides specific guidelines for the following areas: Site Design, Open Space, Vegetation and Landscape, Pedestrian Circulation, Emergency Access and Circulation, Signage, and Building Architecture.

The proposed development of the Academic Center/Library has been included within this submittal and would consist of two buildings: the 3-story Academic Center Library being 32,000 SF and a single story 4,000 SF multi-purpose building. There would be a potential future expansion of the facility that would add an additional 4,000 SF. The Academic Center/ Library would have a maximum height of 60 feet. The exterior of the buildings would be made up of concrete masonry, glass, spandrel glass, painted break metal, stamped steel panels, stone, and stucco.

The development of the Middle School is also a part of the current proposal and would be one, two story building with 3 wings, with a maximum height of 35 feet. The north wing would be 9,000 SF, the east wing would be 11,500 SF and the south wing would be 9,500 SF. The Middle School would have a potential future expansion of 5,000 SF. The exterior of the building would be made up of concrete masonry, glass, stucco, and painted break metal. Lockers would also be located on the outside of the building.

As designed, the project site would drain roughly from the periphery of the site to the interior of the site. All onsite drainage would be collected by a series of connected drains and then directed into the City's storm drain system.

The proposed project landscaping has been reviewed by City Landscape staff and would comply with all applicable City of San Diego landscape ordinances and standards.

There are currently 287 parking stalls onsite. During the review of the project it was determined that this was deficient by sixteen stalls when the current population of 1,030 students is taken into consideration. As a part of the permit for this project the applicant would be required to provide an additional sixteen stalls prior to issuance of the building permits for the development associated with this project to bring the total number of stalls up to 303. This would be achieved through the restriping of some of the existing lots onsite. The newly striped spaces would be done in compliance with the current City of San Diego Parking Regulations. The maximum enrollment at the school is 1,050 students. When the school is at maximum enrollment the applicant will be required to provide 309 spaces on the site.

The project is located in the Parking Impact Overlay Zone (UCSD), and the Community Plan Implementation Overlay Zone (Area A) of the University Community Plan and is consistent with the policies governing these overlay zones. The University Community Plan designates the site for private school use. The proposed project is consistent with this designation. Additionally the project site is partially within the 60-65 dB CNEL contours for MCAS Miramar. School uses are compatible within this area provided they attenuate interior noise levels to 45 dB or lower. The proposed project would meet this requirement

The project site is zoned RS-1-7. This zone requires a minimum lot size of 5,000 square-feet and allows educational facilities, specifically kindergarten through 12th grade, with a CUP. Additionally the RS-1-7 zone has a maximum structure height of thirty feet. The project is proposing a maximum structure height of 60 feet and therefore, the PDP is required to deviate

from this restriction.

Community Plan Analysis:

The subject property is designated ‘School’ by the University Community Plan (UCP). The site falls within Community Plan Implementation Overlay Zone (CPIOZ) ‘A’ and the 60-65 Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) contours for MCAS Miramar. Additionally, the project site is located within the Central Subarea of the UCP’s Urban Design Element, which provides recommendations to improve the central community’s urban form and cohesiveness as new construction occurs.

The CPIOZ A is used to limit uses and development intensity to the levels specified in the Land Use and Development Intensity Table (Table 3). The Development Intensity Table of the UCP identifies the subject site as Subarea 17, where expansion of the school uses is permitted, subject to discretionary review. School uses are conditionally compatible within the 60-65 CNEL contour so long as the outdoor day/night average sound level will be attenuated to 45 decibels indoors, and the outdoor noise level is acceptable for associated outdoor activities. The proposed project will meet this requirement.

To improve the Central Subarea’s urban form and cohesiveness, the Urban Design Element of the community plan provides recommendations which address issues such as bulk and scale, building height transition, building articulation, pedestrian circulation, provision and location of parking, solar access, and signage. The proposed project has provided design guidelines to address those issues and ensure that future phases of development for LJCDS implement the recommendations found in the Urban Design Element.

In particular, the proposed project will provide articulation of the building massing to create an appropriately scaled environment for small children while simultaneously providing a continuous transition to the larger buildings directly adjacent to the site. Pedestrian circulation through the campus will provide direct connections between desired points. Pedestrian paths will meet ADA requirements and will be suited for emergency and maintenance vehicles where applicable. A new parking structure will be implemented in the Interim Phase to reduce the amount of surface parking currently existing on-site. The structure will observe the same design criteria as the overall campus building, utilizing the same palette of materials and colors. The project will utilize the existing landform, building massing, and form shifts to enhance solar access. Signage will be integrated into the site and building design and will conform to the City’s sign regulations.

Environmental Analysis:

The City of San Diego conducted an Initial Study and determined that the proposed project will not have a significant environmental effect. A Negative Declaration, Project Number 41982, has been prepared for the project in accordance with State of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines.

A traffic study titled “La Jolla Country Day-Master Plan Traffic Analysis,” dated March 1, 2005 was prepared by Rick Engineering Company. The report was prepared to determine if any traffic-related impacts within the project area roadways and intersection would occur due to the proposed Master Plan. On-site traffic counts calculated that the school generated 3,351 Average Daily Trips (ADT). With a current student enrollment of 1,030 students, a trip generation rate for the school site was calculated at 3.254 trips per student. The calculated trip generation rate of 3.254 trips per student was utilized to estimate the traffic generation for a maximum student enrollment of 1,050 students. It was determined that 1,050 students would generate 3,416 ADT. The proposed relocation of the campus main entry from Genesee Avenue to Eastgate Mall would eliminate site access from Genesee Avenue and reroute access to Eastgate Mall and Regents Road.

The project is expected to add 65 ADT, 33 AM peak hour trips and 6 PM peak hour trips based on a student enrollment increase from 1,030 students to the maximum allowed 1,050 students. The proposed relocation of the main drop-off points from a main drop-off/pick-up area from Genesee Avenue to Eastgate Mall would move the existing access points from a major street to a collector street. Volumes along Genesee Avenue between Regents Road and Eastgate Mall would generally be reduced by approximately 300 ADT due to this relocation of the main access. Based on the traffic analysis, with the assumption of a maximum enrollment of 1,050 student enrollment, no significant impacts were calculated at the nearby project area roadways and intersection during the near-term and horizon year 2030 conditions and therefore no mitigation is required.

Project-Related Issues:

The proposed project has applied for a PDP in order to deviate from the height restriction of 30 feet within the RS-1-7 zone. The project proposes a maximum height of 60 feet on the site for the Academic Center/Library, future Parking Garage, future Theatre, and future Gymnasium. All remaining facilities onsite that would be developed with the implementation of the Master Plan would be limited to a height of 45 feet.

The UCSD Health Sciences/East Campus area is west of Regents Road immediately adjacent to La Jolla Country Day School. This area is also zoned RS-1-7 and has a maximum height of 30 feet per the zone. However, this site is governed by two planning documents from UCSD which govern maximum heights. The East Campus Health Sciences Neighborhood Planning Study (UCSD, July 2000) applies to the majority of the area of East Campus between Interstate 5, Genesee Avenue and Regents Road. This document sets the maximum height for the Neighborhood Plan at 60 feet. The Science Research Park Development Concept (UCSD, May 2002) plans the area along Regents Road south of Health Sciences Drive. This study does not have a designated height limit but shows that the buildings can be between two and four stories of scientific research. Typically, four stories of research buildings range between 40 and 60 feet. Additionally, in a relatively close vicinity to the project site along Genesee Avenue there are commercial buildings which are well over the 60 feet that is proposed with the project.

The project is proposing the deviation for height in order to allow for denser academic facilities. By structuring parking and providing taller facilities the campus will be able to more efficiently use its 23.98 acre site and maintain its athletic fields. These athletic fields will also serve as a buffer to the residential community on the northeast side of Genesee Avenue.

Additionally, the Master Plan contains design guidelines to address mass, scale and screening. These design guidelines include: utilizing topography to integrate the buildings with the existing landform; using primary building forms to transition between adjacent and existing onsite buildings; articulation of secondary massing with offsets, shifts of plane, stepped terraces, and irregular rooflines; enhancement of articulations with changes of material, texture and color; cluster small-scale elements, such as planter walls, where necessary to transition building mass and integrate into the landscape; utilization of massing and form shifts to enhance solar protection where appropriate; discouraging of period or heavily stylized vernaculars or ‘themes’; introduction of expressive roof forms over significant areas or functions to enhance visual interest and articulate overall massing.

Based on the surrounding uses and the implementation of the design guidelines in the Master Plan, the height limits of 60 feet for the Academic Center/Library, future Theatre, and future Gymnasium and 45 feet for the remaining future development on the site are appropriate are not out of character for the area.

Eastgate Mall currently runs along the southern boundary of the property and is classified as a four lane collector street within the University Community Plan. Additionally, the City of San Diego maintains a 60-foot area between the property line and the curb along Eastgate Mall. La Jolla Country Day School currently has an encroachment removal agreement to use the area for parking, landscaping, play yard, and a chain link fence and gates. No structures are allowed to exist in this area. The Master Plan designates that the main entry and drop-off area be moved from Genesee Avenue to Eastgate Mall. Should Eastgate Mall be widened to a four-lane collector, the parking and drop-off would be accommodated within the parking structure. The parking structure would then be expanded to three levels, with the lower level designated primarily for vehicular drop off and the displaced parking from the lots along Eastgate Mall would be accommodated within the parking structure. The school bus loading for this scenario would occur at the current surface lot off Regents Road. At no time would the parking be reduced below the required 309 parking stalls based on a full enrollment of 1,050 students.

Subsequent development that is associated with the implementation of the Master Plan shall be evaluated by the City of San Diego via a Process 2 level Substantial Conformance Review.

Critical Project Features to Consider During Substantial Conformance Review

- INTENSITY OF DEVELOPMENT: The student population should not exceed 1,050 students and the full time equivalent staff of 195 should not exceed.
- SITE DESIGN: Future submittals should closely conform to the design guidelines and phases within the Master Plan. Heights on the site should conform

- to the conditions within the permit.
- **PARKING/CIRCULATION:** At no time should the parking drop below the number of stalls required in the permit.
- **ARCHITECTURE:** The architecture for future development should conform to the design guidelines within the Master Plan.
- **LANDSCAPING:** Landscaping onsite should conform to the conditions within the permit and the guidelines and plant palettes within the Master Plan.

Conclusion:

Staff recommends approval of the proposal as requested. The project is consistent with the University Community Plan as well as the underlying zone, aside from the requested height deviations. The University City Community Planning Group unanimously voted to approve the project as proposed.

The proposed project does not propose any additional student enrollment beyond the current maximum enrollment of 1,050 students. The project would provide the required number of parking stalls onsite throughout implementation of the Master Plan and would not result in any significant traffic impacts. Additionally, the requested height deviation is appropriate for the site because it is similar to neighboring development and design guidelines are in place to govern the future development on the site. The Planned Development Permit for height deviations allows the applicant to more efficiently use its 23.98 acre site and to maintain the athletic fields onsite.

ALTERNATIVES

- 1. Approve Planned Development Permit No. 214066 and Conditional Use Permit No. 120471 with modifications.**
- 2. Deny Planned Development Permit No. 214066 and Conditional Use Permit No. 120471, if the findings required to approve the project cannot be affirmed.**

Respectfully submitted,

**Marcela Escobar-Eck
Deputy Director, Customer Support and
Information Division
Development Services Department**

**Michael VanBuskirk,
Project Manager
Customer Support and
Information Division
Development Services Department**

ESCOBAR-ECK/MJV

Attachments:

1. Aerial Photograph
2. Community Plan Land Use Map
3. Project Location Map
4. Project Data Sheet
5. Project Plans
6. Master Plan Phasing Plans
7. Draft Permit with Conditions
8. Draft Resolution with Findings
9. Copies of Declaration of Restrictions
10. Copies of CUP No. 3533 and amendments
11. Community Planning Group Recommendation
12. Ownership Disclosure Statement
13. Project Chronology
14. La Jolla Country Day School Master Plan (Provided Separately-only to Planning Commissioners. Copies available for viewing)

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