

Docket Item #15
SPECIAL USE PERMIT #2003-0074

Planning Commission Meeting
October 7, 2003

ISSUE: Consideration of a request for a special use permit to expand the playground and increase the number of children by three at a child day care center.

APPLICANT: Abracadabra Child Care and Development Center of Baptist Temple Church

LOCATION: 6 West Masonic View Avenue

ZONE: R-5/Residential

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION, OCTOBER 7, 2003: On a motion by Mr. Leibach, seconded by Mr. Dunn, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of the request, subject to compliance with all applicable codes, ordinances and staff recommendation. The motion carried on a vote of 7 to 0.

Reason: The Planning Commission agreed with the staff analysis.

Speakers:

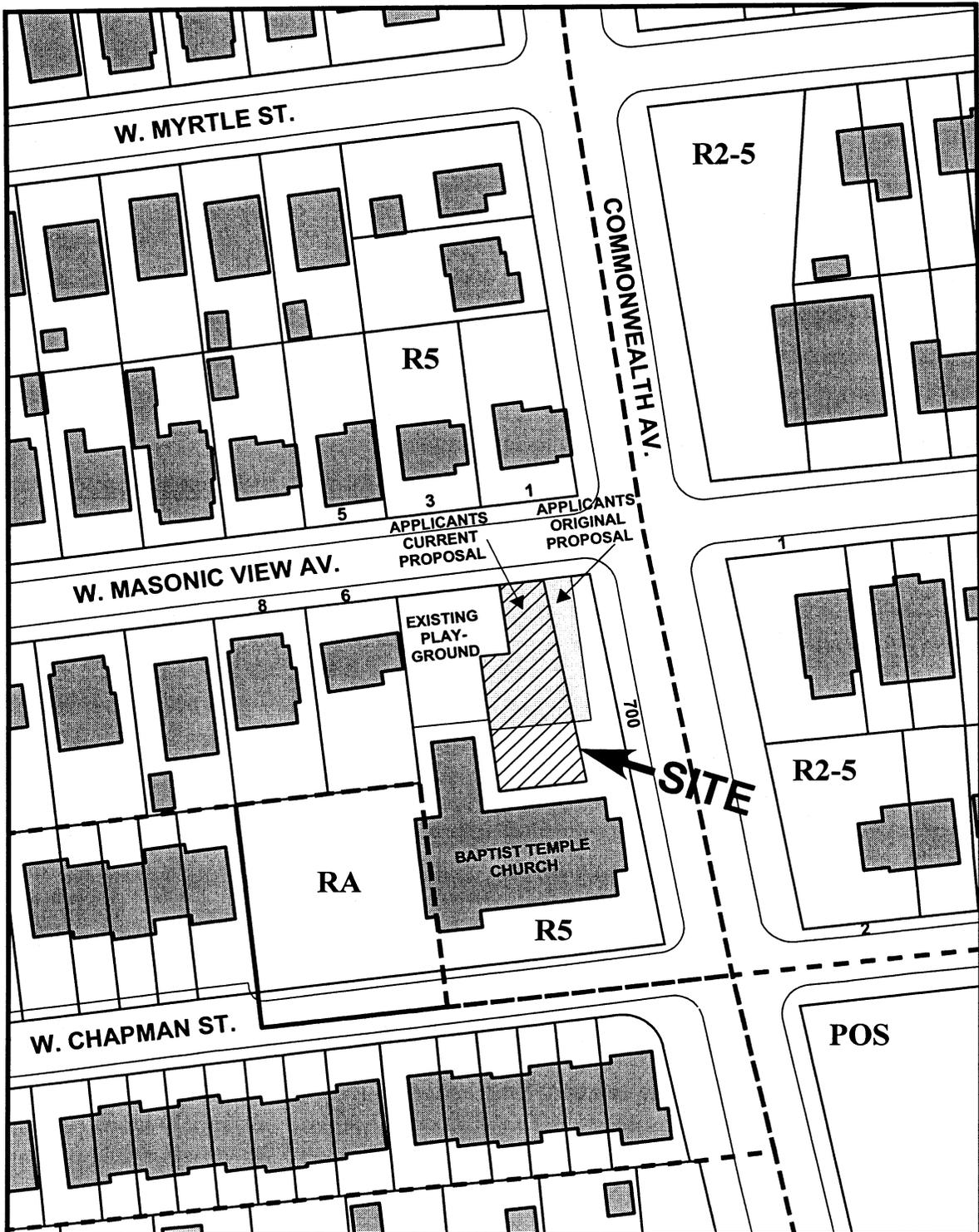
David Bisbee, parent, spoke in support of the application.

The following individuals also expressed their support for the application:

- Daniel Pattarini, parent and resident
- Jeff Kline, parent and resident
- John Sprinkle, Jr., neighbor and parent
- Marsha Oshima, parent
- Chris Hill, resident
- Kathy Wilson, Abracadabra
- Elizabeth Kennedy, resident
- Gillian Ray, parent
- Karen Moniz, neighbor and parent
- Brian McDonald, resident
- Frank Vassallo, parent
- Doug Rutherford, resident
- Lonnie Rich, attorney

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION, SEPTEMBER 4, 2003: By unanimous consent, the Planning Commission deferred the request.

Reason: The applicant requested a deferral.



SUP #2003-0074

10/07/03



STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Recommend **approval** subject to all applicable codes and ordinances and the following conditions:

1. That all pick-up and delivery of children be done from the off-street parking area on West Chapman Street and that parents be required to bring children into the center. (P&Z)
2. **CONDITION AMENDED BY STAFF:** That the enrollment be limited to ~~thirty eight (38)~~ forty-one (41) children as requested by the applicant. (P&Z) (~~SUP#1569-D~~)
3. That the play area not be used prior to 9:00 A.M. (P&Z) (SUP#1569)
4. **CONDITION DELETED BY STAFF:** ~~That the play area be maintained to the satisfaction of Planning and Zoning to include a four (4) foot high chainlink fence along the west side of the play area. (P&Z) (SUP#1569-A)~~
5. **CONDITION AMENDED BY STAFF:** ~~That~~ The applicant shall install and maintain fencing and landscape screening around the expanded playground area maintained to the satisfaction of the Directors of Planning and Zoning and Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities ~~between the west side of the play area and the adjoining property.~~ (P&Z)(SUP#1569) (Human Services)
6. That the emergency lighting be maintained to the satisfaction of the Fire Department. (Fire) (SUP#1569-A)
7. The panic hardware shall be maintained on all exit doors. (Fire) (SUP#1569)
8. The play area shall be at least 50 feet from western property line. (City Council) (SUP#1569-A)
9. The hours of operation shall be from 7:30 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. (City Council) (SUP#1569-A)
10. The applicant shall obtain a new certificate of occupancy to reflect the increase in the number of occupants. (Code Enf.) (SUP#1569-D)
11. **CONDITION ADDED BY STAFF:** Not more than 30 children shall be permitted to play outdoors at any one time. (P&Z)

12. **CONDITION ADDED BY STAFF:** All existing trees and shrubs in the expanded playground area shall be maintained. (P&Z) (Human Services).
13. **CONDITION ADDED BY STAFF:** The applicant shall ensure that the staff to child ratio on the playground not exceed one staff for every seven children. (Human Services)
14. **CONDITION ADDED BY STAFF:** All loudspeakers shall be prohibited from the exterior of the building and no amplified sound shall be audible at the property line. (T&ES)
15. **CONDITION ADDED BY STAFF:** The applicant is to contact the Crime Prevention Unit of the Alexandria Police Department at 703-838-4520 regarding a security survey for the business and a robbery awareness program for all employees. (Police)
16. **CONDITION ADDED BY STAFF:** The Director of Planning and Zoning shall review the special use permit one year after approval and shall docket the matter for consideration by the Planning Commission and City Council if (a) there have been documented violations of the permit conditions, (b) the director has received a request from any person to docket the permit for review as a result of a complaint that rises to the level of a violation, or (c) the director has determined that there are problems with the operation of the use and that new or revised conditions are needed. (P&Z)

Staff Note: In accordance with section 11-506(c) of the zoning ordinance, construction or operation shall be commenced and diligently and substantially pursued within 18 months of the date of granting of a special use permit by City Council or the special use permit shall become void.

DISCUSSION:

- 1. The applicant, Abracadabra Child Care and Development Center, requests special use permit approval to expand the playground at an existing child care center located at 6 West Masonic View Avenue.
- 2. The subject property consists of seven lots of record having a combined frontage of 216 feet on Chapman Street, 201 feet of frontage on Commonwealth Avenue, and 149 feet of frontage on West Masonic View Avenue. The property is developed by the Baptist Temple Church, church annex building, and off-street parking area. The church annex building is occupied by the Abracadabra Child Care Center.
- 3. On June 18, 1983, City Council approved SUP#1569 for the operation of a child care center from the church annex at 6 West Masonic View Avenue. The City Council has granted the following special use permits for the subject property:

<u>SUP #</u>	<u>CC Action</u>	<u>Applicant/Address/Use</u>
1569	6-18-83 Approved	Baptist Temple Church 6 West Masonic View Av Day Nursery for 30 children
1569-A	6-16-84 Approved	Baptist Temple Church 6 West Masonic View Av Review of Day Nursery
1569-B	9-14-85 Approved	Baptist Temple Church 6 West Masonic View Av Review of Day Nursery
1569-C	9-13-85 Approved	Baptist Temple Church 6 West Masonic View Av Expand playground area/ remove limit of children outdoors
1569-D	5-18-87 Approved	Baptist Temple Church 6 West Masonic View Av Increase enrollment for ages 2-6

- 4. The applicant requests permission to expand the existing playground south and east into an open area north of the Baptist Temple Church, an intensification of the child care center.

The playground is currently about 2,429 square feet. The applicant proposes to increase the size to total approximately 6,383 square feet. The proposal initially proposed the playground be setback approximately 25 feet from Commonwealth Avenue. However, because of staff's concerns regarding the visual impacts of the use on the residential character of the street, the applicant revised her plans and now proposes that the playground be setback 45 feet from the curb of Commonwealth Avenue.

The applicant proposes a number of improvements to the playground including new equipment and varying surface materials including grass, pea gravel, sand, cement for a tricycle track, dirt, water, and rocks and boulders (See attached expansion plans). A play structure and swing set are proposed on the south side of the playground facing the church building. The applicant also proposes a small storage shed adjacent to the parking area to house tricycles for the children to use on the playground. The applicant proposes that new fencing be installed around the new playground. The applicant is considering iron fencing, however, given the cost of iron fencing, it will most likely be black chain link. The fencing will be locked when not in operation. All existing trees on the property are proposed to remain.

Parents of the children attending the center are responsible for the work involved in planning, designing, and implementing the playground expansion project. Representatives of that group have met with staff to express their strong support.

In addition, the applicant informed staff that because of some interior remodeling that opened some closet spaces to usable space, the State License for the facility increased to 41 since the last SUP approval. Therefore, the applicant requests to increase the allowable enrollment to 41 children. Although the applicant states that she will typically operate with 38 children, she wanted the flexibility to occasionally receive special needs children.

There are no other changes proposed as part of this application.

5. The applicant currently cares for up to 38 children from age two through the age of eligibility for kindergarten. Outdoor play periods are generally from 11:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m., and 4:15 to 5:45 p.m., Monday through Friday, depending on weather conditions.
6. On August 1, 2003, staff visited the subject property to determine if the business was in compliance with the conditions of its special use permit (SUP#1569-D). Staff found no violations of the special use permit.
7. The hours of operation of the center are 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Parents drop off their children between 7:30 and 9:30 a.m., and pick them up between 3:45 and 6:00 p.m. Pick up and drop off occurs from the church parking lot accessed from Chapman Street.

8. The child care center employees seven full time teachers, a full time director, and a part time volunteer aide.
9. Trash includes paper items such as water cups and tissues. The total trash amounts to a medium sized garbage bag. Litter on the playground with receptacles located on the playground, and the locked fence will prevent littering inside the playground.
10. Zoning: The subject property is located in the R-5/Single-family zone. Section 3-403 (B) of the zoning ordinance allows a day nursery in a church building only with a special use permit.
11. Master Plan: The proposed use is consistent with the Potomac West Small Area Plan for residential low land use.

STAFF ANALYSIS:

Staff does not object to the increase in enrollment to 41 children. Staff finds the three additional children will not cause any significant zoning impacts on the property. In regard to expanding the playground, staff has two major concerns: the impact of intensifying the child care center on the neighborhood; and the significant loss of open space to a more developed private recreational use.

Impacts of increasing playground area

The child care center is located in a residential neighborhood that is already impacted from the nonresidential aspects of the preschool use, including its additional traffic during pick up and drop off hours, noise from outside activity, and higher volume of trash. Although staff supports child care centers on church properties in general, it must carefully consider any application and any intensification when the center operates in a residential setting. In this case, increasing the playground area will visually emphasize the nonresidential use of the property, detracting from the residential character in the area.

Loss of open space

As the remaining green parcels in the city continue to be threatened by development, it is important that development of any kind on remaining open spaces be considered carefully. For both aesthetic and environmental reasons, open space is important for the city as a whole and for neighborhoods. In this case, the open space is on a prominent corner of a residential neighborhood. Development of any kind on this now open, grassy corner will impact the character of the neighborhood.

Conclusion

On the other hand, staff is sensitive to the fact that the existing play area is small and may not adequately serve the needs of the facility. The applicant proposes to keep all existing trees on the property, and has agreed to install fencing and shrubs for screening. Additionally, although open space will be lost because of the expansion, the use of that land will be light recreation which will not involve grading of any kind and will be occupied with minimal structure that includes playground equipment set back from the street. Additionally, the applicant has made a significant effort to respond to staff's concerns by revising her plans, proposing that the playground be setback 45 feet from Commonwealth Avenue to reduce the visual impacts on Commonwealth, and installing shrubs to provide additional screening. Finally, the use has existed on the property since 1983, and staff is not aware of any major problems caused from the use.

Staff recommends a number of conditions intended to soften the expansion of the playground and to minimize any potential negative impacts from the expansion. Staff recommends that the number of children allowed to play on the playground at any one time be limited to 30. Staff also recommends that the design of the fencing and landscaping installed to screen the playground, be subject to review by staff. In addition, staff recommends that any trees on the property not be removed as part of the playground expansion, as the applicant has already proposed. Finally, staff recommends the standard one year review condition to ensure that, if there are any issues created by the expansion, they can be addressed.

With these conditions, staff recommends approval of the special use permit.

STAFF: Eileen Fogarty, Director, Department of Planning and Zoning;
Barbara Ross, Deputy Director;
Valerie Peterson, Urban Planner.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

Legend: C - code requirement R - recommendation S - suggestion F - finding

Transportation & Environmental Services:

- C-1 The applicant shall comply with the City of Alexandria's Noise Control Code, Title 11, Chapter 5, which sets the maximum permissible noise level as measured at the property line.
- R-1 All loudspeakers shall be prohibited from the exterior of the building and no amplified sound shall be audible at the property line.

Code Enforcement:

- F-1 The type of proposed playground equipment may require a construction permit. The applicant shall contact the Code Enforcement Bureau to determine if construction permits are required.
- F-2 The approved occupant load for the structure is 38 persons (including staff). The occupant load cannot be increased without violating the approved Certificate of Occupancy for the structure.

Police Department:

- R-1 The applicant is to contact the Crime Prevention Unit of the Alexandria Police Department at 703-838-4520 regarding a security survey for the child care center.
- R-2 The applicant is to contact the Crime Prevention Unit of the Alexandria Police Department at 703-838-4520 regarding safety programs available through the department for the children.

Human Services (Social Services):

- R-1 The site visit to review Special Use Permit #2003-0043 (proposal for a new playground) at the Abracadabra Child Care and Development Center was completed on July 10, 2003. DHS staff recommends approval of the Special Use Permit with the center's acknowledgment that the existing fencing will be replaced to encompass the new playground and that the existing greenery remain. Furthermore, as agreed upon by the center, the staff to child ratio should not exceed 1 staff per 7 children as the new playground will be larger and will allow children access to different activity stations on the playground causing them to spread out more.
- R-2 The Office for Early Childhood Development has no objection to an increase in the maximum enrollment for Abracadabra Child Care and Development Center from 38 to 41. They are licensed by the Commonwealth of Virginia for 41 children and the number is appropriate for the size of their facility, including the playground.

APPLICATION for SPECIAL USE PERMIT # 2003-0074

[must use black ink or type]

PROPERTY LOCATION: 6 West Masonic View Avenue

TAX MAP REFERENCE: 53.03-03-13 ZONE: R-5

APPLICANT Name: Abacadabra Child Care & Development Center

Address: # 6 West Masonic Vw. Ave.

PROPERTY OWNER Name: Baptist Temple Church

Address: 700 Commonwealth Avenue

PROPOSED USE: Expansion of existing playground approximately 45 feet to the east into the church property and 85 feet to the south into the church property, an unused rectangular portion of church property on the north side of Baptist Temple Church, which is located

THE UNDERSIGNED hereby applies for a Special Use Permit in accordance with the provisions of Article XI, Section 11-500 of the 1992 Zoning Ordinance of the City of Alexandria, Virginia.

THE UNDERSIGNED, having obtained permission from the property owner, hereby grants permission to the City of Alexandria to post placard notice on the property for which this application is requested, pursuant to Article XI, Section 11-301(B) of the 1992 Zoning Ordinance of the City of Alexandria, Virginia.

THE UNDERSIGNED hereby attests that all of the information herein provided and specifically including all surveys, drawings, etc., required to be furnished by the applicant are true, correct and accurate to the best of their knowledge and belief. The applicant is hereby notified that any written materials, drawings or illustrations submitted in support of this application and any specific oral representations made to the Planning Commission or City Council in the course of public hearings on this application will be binding on the applicant unless those materials or representations are clearly stated to be non-binding or illustrative of general plans and intentions, subject to substantial revision, pursuant to Article XI, Section 11-207(A)(10), of the 1992 Zoning Ordinance of the City of Alexandria, Virginia.

Abacadabra of Baptist Temple Church
Print Name of Applicant or Agent

[Signature]
Signature

700 Commonwealth Ave.
Mailing/Street Address

703 548 7796 703 683 9629
Telephone # Fax #

Alexandria, VA 22301
City and State Zip Code

June 24, 2003
Date

DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE - OFFICE USE ONLY

Application Received: _____ Date & Fee Paid: _____ \$ _____

ACTION - PLANNING COMMISSION: _____

ACTION - CITY COUNCIL: _____

All applicants must complete this form. Supplemental forms are required for child care facilities, restaurants, automobile oriented uses and freestanding signs requiring special use permit approval.

1. The applicant is (check one) the Owner Contract Purchaser
 Lessee or Other: _____ of the subject property.

State the name, address and percent of ownership of any person or entity owning an interest in the applicant, unless the entity is a corporation or partnership in which case identify each owner of more than ten percent.

Abracadabra is owned and operated by Baptist Temple Church,
which is located at 700 Commonwealth Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22301.
Stewart Perry is the Pastor and the Trustees are Chuck Dale,
Angelyn Hall and Paul Thomas.

If property owner or applicant is being represented by an authorized agent such as an attorney, realtor, or other person for which there is some form of compensation, does this agent or the business in which the agent is employed have a business license to operate in the City of Alexandria, Virginia?

- NA Yes. Provide proof of current City business license
NA No. The agent shall obtain a business license prior to filing application, if required by the City Code.

2. Submit a floor plan and a plot plan with parking layout of the proposed use. One copy of the plan is required for plans that are 8½" x 14" or smaller. Twenty-four copies are required for larger plans or if the plans cannot be easily reproduced. The planning director may waive requirements for plan submission upon receipt of a written request which adequately justifies a waiver. This requirement does not apply if a Site Plan Package is required.

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

3. The applicant shall describe below the nature of the request in detail so that the Planning Commission and City Council can understand the nature of the operation and the use, including such items as the nature of the activity, the number and type of patrons, the number of employees, the hours, how parking is to be provided for employees and patrons, and whether the use will generate any noise.

The director and parents of Abracadabra Child Care and Development Center and the pastor and congregants of Baptist Temple Church request permission to expand the child care center's existing playground approximately 45 feet to the east into the church property and approximately 85 feet to the south into the church property, an unused rectangular portion of church property on the north side of Baptist Temple Church, which is located at 700 Commonwealth Avenue between West Masonic View Avenue and West Chapman Street. The child care facility, Abracadabra is located on the corner of West Masonic View Avenue and Commonwealth Avenue, to the west of the existing and proposed play area.

For its excellence in the implementation of the High/Scope Cognitive Preschool Curriculum, Abracadabra has been named a Demonstration Site, the only one in the metropolitan area. High/Scope is the educational approach that the city's Early Childhood Commission in consultation with the Alexandria Child Care Director's Association has chosen for the training of city teachers; it is also used by Alexandria Head Start.

We want to extend the excellence of our indoor learning program to our playground with the creation of an "outdoor classroom" where the learning environment meets curricular objectives by encouraging child-initiated, teacher-supported play activities that are both stimulating and safe. How can we achieve this? First, the playground should be adjacent to the indoor classroom so as to provide for a free flow of activities from one to the other. Second, the playground should be fenced in to provide the boundaries of the learning environment. Finally, the size of the early childhood playground should offer at least 100 square feet per child. This is a minimum requirement and may not be enough to provide the ideal play environment. Beyond these basic considerations, the site should

- ~Provide both open and closed areas and accomodate a variety of play activities
- ~Provide for the four basic play categories--physical, social, creative-cognitive, and quiet retreat--as elaborated in *Planning Space Opportunities for Young Children* (Esbensen, 1980)
- ~Maintain a scale and cozy quality that relate to the size of young children.
- ~Provide for sun and shade: have landscaping characteristics that provide wind protection
- ~Provide a variety of color and geometric forms
- ~Provide a variety of texture in the surfacing materials, hard and soft for different activities
- ~Provide a variety of landscape components and topography

To organize this outdoor classroom, experts recommend zoning of the play space. While it is virtually impossible to imagine a standard playground--facilities that accomodate programs for young children differ so much--this principle of zoning the outdoor environment has served to establish pleasant outdoor classrooms for a limited number of programs in Canada and the United States that have "ideal" playgrounds. Attached is the explanation of the seven zones of the "ideal" playground, which we can provide with the expanded space.

Please understand that this proposal seeks to expand the existing space to serve the existing number of children in the center. Because of the state licensing standards regarding the minimum indoor square footage required per child, we can not enroll more than the 41 children we now serve. Therefore, the proposal does not increase the intensity of use of the playground; indeed, because the additional play space and play choices will lessen the current concentration of children crowding on and around the playscape, there will be a dramatic decrease in the noise level of the playground.

Abracadabra currently serves 41 children and employs nine staff members (seven full time teachers, a full time director, and a part time volunteer aide). None of these numbers will change as a result of the proposal. The current daily routine of two outdoor play periods, one in the morning from 11:00 - 11:45 A.M., and one in the late afternoon from 4:15 - 5:45 P.M. will continue. There will be no playground activity prior to 9:00 A.M. (a condition of our special use permit) and the expansion does not include any movement to the west--only to the east and south--thereby enabling us to continue abiding to another of our special use permit conditions, which is to maintain a distance of at least 50 feet between the playground and the nearest neighbor to the west.

As the drawing indicates, we plan to maintain much of the grassy area, except for the resilient surfacing of pea gravel underneath the physical structures and the sand in the water/sand area. Grass is itself a safe, resilient surface for children to play upon and it is our desire to replicate as much as possible the sort of grassy outdoor environment that many adults experienced as children, freely without the fences required to keep children safe in today's busy urban and suburban settings.

The center's operating policies and procedures will not change: employees will still arrive and depart in two shifts: 7:30 A.M. to 4:30 P.M. and 9:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. in order to cover the center's hours of operation Monday through Friday from 7:30 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. Parents will still use the on-site parking lot behind the church and adjacent to the child care facility to drop-off their children (walking them into the center) in a staggered fashion from 7:30 to 9:30 A.M. and also to pick-up their children from 3:45 up until 6:00 P.M. when the center closes. The 21 standard spaces provided for parking on-site is more than sufficient for employee parking and for the drop-off and pick-up of children. Parents are not allowed to use West Masonic View Avenue for drop-off and pick-up; they must use the church parking lot and enter the school through the designated door, which is in back of the center. There is no parent use of the front door onto West Masonic View Avenue. Again, this proposal to expand our play area does nothing to impact or intensify these ongoing operations of the center. They will all remain the same.

New fencing designed to better contain resilient surfacing will be an improvement to the current chain-link fencing along West Masonic View Avenue. Storage placed on the southern end of the playground, away from the neighbors site-line, will house the bikes and loose play items. These sheds will be locked daily along with the gate entry to the playground when the center is not in operation. Additionally, the largest playground structure, the wooden playscape will be moved to the south, farther away from the view of the residents on West Masonic. The current expansion still allows for sufficient setbacks as provided by the city code.

We ask that you give your most serious consideration to this proposal, which we believe restores children's right to experience the rich, bountiful place of learning known as **the great outdoors.**

USE CHARACTERISTICS

4. The proposed special use permit request is for: (check one)

- a new use requiring a special use permit,
- a development special use permit,
- an expansion or change to an existing use without a special use permit,
- expansion or change to an existing use with a special use permit,
- other. Please describe: _____

5. Please describe the capacity of the proposed use:

A. How many patrons, clients, pupils and other such users do you expect? Specify time period (i.e., day, hour, or shift).

Maximum enrollment of 41 students, from 2 years up through the age of eligibility for kindergarten. Play periods are generally from 11:00 to 11:45 A.M. and 4:15 to 5:45 P.M., Monday through Friday. The late play period is often curtailed by inclement weather and nightfall.

B. How many employees, staff and other personnel do you expect? Specify time period (i.e., day, hour, or shift).

~~Abracadabra employs seven full time teachers, a full time director, and a parttime volunteer aide, however, only 5 staff members are on the playground in the morning and only 3 staff members at night.~~

Teachers arrive and depart in two shifts: 7:30 to 4:30 & 9 to 6:00.
6. Please describe the proposed hours and days of operation of the proposed use:

Day:

Hours:

Playground: Monday-Friday

A.M. 11:00-11:45. P.M. 4:15-5:45.

Center: Monday-Friday

7:30 A.M. to 6:00 P.M.

7. Please describe any potential noise emanating from the proposed use:

A. Describe the noise levels anticipated from all mechanical equipment and patrons.

Any noise would come from the children at play. The larger play area would reduce the concentration of children in any one play area and will probably abate the current noise level.

B. How will the noise from patrons be controlled? See 7A. No use prior to 9:00 A.M. Play periods on the playground are limited to less than an hour in the morning and less than two hours in the afternoon. Also, we practice staggered procedures for entering and exiting the play area thereby reducing noise and crowding. There are enough adults to provide interactive supervision and to ensure that schoolwide expectations of peaceful behavior are met.

8. Describe any potential odors emanating from the proposed use and plans to control them:

None.

9. Please provide information regarding trash and litter generated by the use:

A. What type of trash and garbage will be generated by the use?

Paper items such as water cups and kleenex. Since the children almost never eat on the playground, there is little trash generated.

B. How much trash and garbage will be generated by the use?

There will be no change from the present, which amounts to a medium size bag of paper items per day.

C. How often will trash be collected?

Daily

D. How will you prevent littering on the property, streets and nearby properties?

No litter is anticipated from proposal. Locks on the playground gate and toy receptacles when the center is not in operation limits public use and consequently, the litter problem.

10. Will any hazardous materials, as defined by the state or federal government, be handled, stored, or generated on the property?

Yes. No.

If yes, provide the name, monthly quantity, and specific disposal method below:

11. Will any organic compounds, for example paint, ink, lacquer thinner, or cleaning or degreasing solvent, be handled, stored, or generated on the property?

Yes. No. Only small amounts of water-based paints are used.

If yes, provide the name, monthly quantity, and specific disposal method below:

12. What methods are proposed to ensure the safety of residents, employees and patrons?

The play area is fenced on all sides and the children are always supervised by adult staff. Resilient surfacing is used under climbing structures. Safety means adherence to the following interrelated activities: design of the play area, design and installation of equipment, maintenance and adult supervision combined with a sufficient number of play activities and play spaces. Safe, interesting play

ALCOHOL SALES for young children generally requires that things be at hand to be moved, built with, rearranged.

13. Will the proposed use include the sale of beer, wine, or mixed drinks?

NA Yes. No.

If yes, describe alcohol sales below, including if the ABC license will include on-premises and/or off-premises sales. Existing uses must describe their existing alcohol sales and/or service and identify any proposed changes in that aspect of the operation.

PARKING AND ACCESS REQUIREMENTS

14. Please provide information regarding the availability of off-street parking:

A. How many parking spaces are required for the proposed use pursuant to section 8-200 (A) of the zoning ordinance?

Church parking lot is sufficient for employee parking and parent drop-off and pick-up.

B. How many parking spaces of each type are provided for the proposed use:

21 Standard spaces

_____ Compact spaces

_____ Handicapped accessible spaces.

_____ Other.

C. Where is required parking located? on-site off-site (check one)

The church lot is behind the main building and adjacent to the ~~the~~ required parking will be located off-site, where will it be located: childcare center

Pursuant to section 8-200 (C) of the zoning ordinance, commercial and industrial uses may provide off-site parking within 500 feet of the proposed use, provided that the off-site parking is located on land zoned for commercial or industrial uses. All other uses must provide parking on-site, except that off-street parking may be provided within 300 feet of the use with a special use permit.

D. If a reduction in the required parking is requested, pursuant to section 8-100 (A) (4) or (5) of the zoning ordinance, complete the PARKING REDUCTION SUPPLEMENTAL APPLICATION.

15. Please provide information regarding loading and unloading facilities for the use:

A. How many loading spaces are required for the use, per section 8-200 (B) of the NA zoning ordinance? _____

B. How many loading spaces are available for the use? _____

C. Where are off-street loading facilities located? NA _____

D. During what hours of the day do you expect loading/unloading operations to occur?

Since no additional children will be added from this proposal, the current practice and numbers will remain: Parents drop-off in a staggered fashion between 7:30 and 9:30 A.M. Pick-up is staggered also and begins at 3:45 through to 6:00 P.M. when it is closing time.

E. How frequently are loading/unloading operations expected to occur, per day or per week, as appropriate? Twice daily: see #15D.

16. Is street access to the subject property adequate or are any street improvements, such as a new turning lane, necessary to minimize impacts on traffic flow?

Street access is more than adequate.

SITE CHARACTERISTICS NA

N/A

17. Will the proposed uses be located in an existing building? Yes No

Do you propose to construct an addition to the building? Yes No

How large will the addition be? _____ square feet.

18. What will the total area occupied by the proposed use be?

_____ sq. ft. (existing) + _____ sq. ft. (addition if any) = _____ sq. ft. (total)

19. The proposed use is located in: (check one)

a stand alone building a house located in a residential zone a warehouse

a shopping center. Please provide name of the center: _____

an office building. Please provide name of the building: _____

other, please describe: _____

◆ **Transition zone**

As children emerge from the building to begin their exploration of the playground, space that provides them with opportunities to size up the yard is necessary. For some children this can be achieved by an open space; for others it is best when they can proceed directly to a low-key activity like painting or play at a water table. The transition zone offers essentially passive or quiet concentration activities allowing children to move from indoors to outdoors at their own speed. This zone may overlap partially with other zones.

◆ **Manipulative/creative zone**

The playground can't provide all the fine-motor-skill materials usually found indoors (blocks, puzzles, beads), but it is important to think about providing a zone with some outdoor activities that can help children develop their fine-motor skills. Such a zone might be located close to the building, to facilitate storage and supervision. The outdoor manipulative/creative materials that have been successfully provided in many programs include clay, plasticine, play dough, and an easel and paints. The zone can also contain carpentry, or construction, materials. When such activities are provided outdoors, children can concentrate on the creative processes without undue concern for spills

◆ **Projective/fantasy zone**

A sand area or an outdoor table that can be used with sand or water can accommodate projective/fantasy play with small objects. An adjacent area might contain small wooden or plastic vehicles and animals, old wooden blocks, dowels, and plastic cartons or containers that children can use in their sand or water play. A sandbox or sand area that lets them sit, kneel, or stand will best suit the combination of sand and water play that young children enjoy.

◆ **Focal/social zone**

A place for children to sit and talk with friends or with their teacher is often overlooked in play yards. A well-shaded garden table placed in a central location adjacent to or bordering the other zones could serve this focal/social function. Here the teacher might support children's activities by discussing with them the insects, rocks, leaves, or sand grains they have found during their play. The zone also can provide children with a comfortable site from which to observe without obligation to participate in the more active play. You might add a couple of single-spring rocking items as observation perches for quiet or shy children.

◆ **Social/dramatic zone**

The playground's social/dramatic zone can take many forms. The basic consideration in furnishing such a zone is to think about enhancing the symbolic play possibilities of the children as they engage in parallel, associative, or cooperative activities. The setting could be an at-grade playhouse furnished with tables and seating and further supplemented with pots, pans, pails, shovels, spoons, and dress-up clothes. Sand should also be available, so the potential for combining sand-cake cooking with dress-up pretend roles can add complexity to the nature of the play and stimulate the use of more diversified language. With the addition of large hollow blocks and interlocking boards, the focus of play in this area can change from residential to commercial with garage, store front, or anything else the children imagine. Making it possible for wheeled toys to find a parking spot close to this area could further extend play possibilities.

◆ **Physical zone**

While the zoning proposed in the previous sections has not given a high priority to gross-motor-skill development, we recognize that children develop both their fine- and gross-motor competence as they move around the overall playspace. The site that throughout provides topographical changes, such as mounds, small hills, clusters of rocks, and boulders, can provide a variety of motoric challenges. These challenges can be increased by the addition of paved paths and wheeled toys, including wagons, wheelbarrows, tricycles, scooters, and bicycles (for the 5-year-olds).

In addition to all this, children need a zone with stationary equipment on which they can balance, swing, sway, climb, and slide together — a physical zone. This zone should be at some distance from most of the quieter activity zones. However it could be close to the social/dramatic zone, since the play equipment could enhance the complexity of role-playing activities.

◆ **Natural element zone**

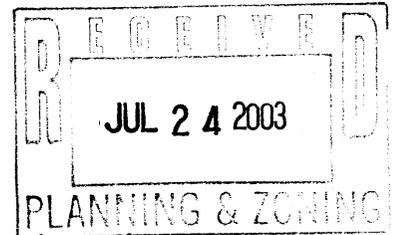
Throughout the outdoor play space, it is desirable to provide natural materials that enable children to become familiar with the textures, colors, and odors of nature. Certainly sand, water, grass, and a variety of nontoxic plants and trees can serve this function. However there is nothing as pleasing to children as watching vegetation grow in their own garden plots, where flowers and vegetables can be cultivated and cared for as part of the curriculum. Vegetables as well as bulbs and hardy annuals grow easily and show rapid results. Garden plots that can be reached easily from either side (about 2 ft wide) are recommended to prevent children from walking on the vegetation by mistake.

There might also be a natural area where digging is possible, where children can use shovels, spades, and rakes to explore earth and possibly dig a tunnel to a land of their dreams

Call me at home if you need anything further: 703 836 7971
I'm on a break until August 18th! My cell phone number is 571-277-0078.
abraCadabra Cathy



Child Care and Development Center



Kathy Wilson, Director

7/23/03

Dear Valerie,

Here's the surface information you requested

A few things to point out:

1) the tumble area should be labeled the Run, Dig & Climb Area! It's to provide a variety of motoric challenges both for fine - and gross-motor-skill development such as a digging area where children can use shovels, spades, and rakes to explore earth and dig tunnels and small hills and clusters of rock and boulders on and around which to climb and negotiate their bodies.

2) pea gravel and sand provide resilient surfacing for falls and enhance symbolic play possibilities.

All best, Kathy

22
700 Commonwealth Avenue • Alexandria, Virginia 22301 • (703) 548-7796

Fax: (703) 683-9629

the ... road ... project



RECEIVED
AUG - 5 2003
P & CD ZONING DIVISION

abracadabra

Child Care and Development Center

Kathy Wilson, Director

DATE: AUGUST 5, 2003
TO: WHOM IT MAY CONCERN
CITY OF ALEXANDRIA
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING
FROM: *KW* KATHY WILSON, DIRECTOR
ABRACADABRA CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT CENTER

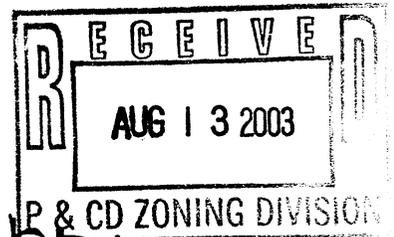
SUBJECT: SUPPLEMENTAL APPLICATION TO SUP #1569-D
Request amendment of the existing special use permit to increase capacity enrollment of child care facility from 38 to 41.

Specifically, we ask that condition # 2 which states: "that the enrollment be limited to thirty-eight (38) children as requested by the applicant" be amended to state: "that the enrollment be limited to forty-one (41) children as requested by the applicant."

This change would make the SUP consistent with our center's current state license, the enrollment figure of which was modified from 38 to 41 after the center's recent renovation opened up additional interior space.

While we would not always enroll up to the capacity figure, the latitude would enable us to enroll an additional child/children with disabilities for whom we are well-equipped and eager to serve due to our newfound accessibility, also occasioned by the renovation.

Thank you for your most serious consideration of this supplemental request.



abracadabra

Child Care and Development Center

Ms. Marguerite Lang
14 W. Rosemont Avenue
Alexandria, Virginia 22301

Kathy Wilson, Director

Dear Marguerite:

You may recall that I am the Director of Abracadabra Child Care and Development Center, located on the corner of West Masonic View and Commonwealth Avenues, and I've applied for a SUP to expand our playground, which the Planning Commission and the City Council will consider on September 4th and September 13th, respectively.

We talked two weeks ago about the possibility of my coming before your executive board before then and I told you that I'd be out of town from August 7th through 11th. These dates have changed due to the limited availability of dates for reduced air fare. I will be out of town from August 13th through the 18th, after which I will be in town up until the Labor Day weekend, then back on Monday evening of September 1st and in town thereafter. (In other words, in addition to the dates between August 19th and 28th, I could meet on either the 2nd or 3rd of September.)

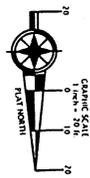
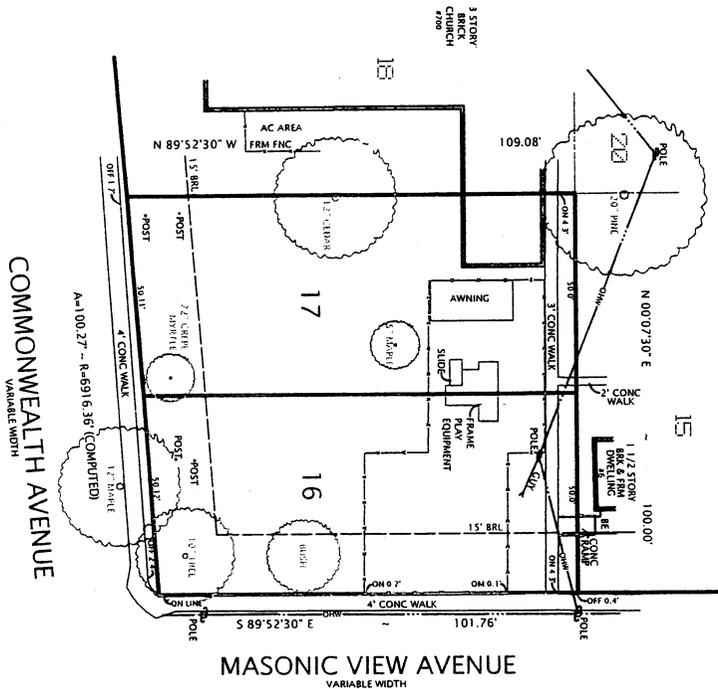
If your board will be meeting when I'm out of town, I could probably send an informed parent to speak with you, if that would be alright. I can best be reached on my cell phone in or out of town: #571-277-0078. I'm sorry for the date change and I hope this did not cause you any inconvenience. I look forward to hearing from you, Marguerite.

Sincerely,



Kathy Wilson

cc: Valerie Peterson

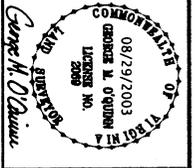


- NOTES: 1. TOTAL AREA - 10,530 SF
 2. TAX MAP 053 03-0371 14
 3. ZONE R-5
 4. OWNER: TERRELL BAPTIST CHURCH
 770 COMMONWEALTH AVENUE
 ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22301

SLIP # 2003-0074
 6 W. Masonic View Ave
 Child Care Playground
 val

PLAT
 SHOWING THE IMPROVEMENTS
 LOTS 16 & 17, BLOCK 1, SECTION NO. 6
ROSEMONT
 (DEED BOOK 764 PAGE 549)
 CITY OF ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA
 AUGUST 29, 2003
 SEPTEMBER 4, 2003 (REVISED)

<p>I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE PORTIONS OF ALL THE EXISTING IMPROVEMENTS HAVE BEEN CORRECTLY SHOWN ON THIS CURRENT MAP AND THAT THE IMPROVEMENTS SHOWN ON THIS MAP WERE INCORPORATED AS OF THIS DATE.</p>	<p>CASE NAME: ARBAC/DUBRA KATHY WILSON</p>
<p>THIS PLAN IS SUBJECT TO RESTRICTIONS OF RECORD. A TITLE REPORT WAS NOT OBTAINED. NO CONING MARKERS SET.</p>	<p>DOMINION SURVEYORS, INC. 8808 H REAR TREE VILLAGE COURT ALEXANDRIA, VA 22304 TEL: 703.619.8539 FAX: 703.798.6412</p>



CASE NAME: ARBAC/DUBRA #10828004 #199-03

SUP 2003-0074



Jackie Henderson

10/07/2003 02:33 PM

To: Eileen Fogarty/Alex@Alex, Barbara Ross/Alex@Alex
cc:
Subject: City of Alexandria Website Contact Us - EMail for Jackie M. Henderson (jackie.henderson@ci.alexandria.va.us)

This was sent to me by mistake, so I'm forwarding it to you for the Planning Commission members.

Jackie M. Henderson
City Clerk and Clerk of Council

----- Forwarded by Jackie Henderson/Alex on 10/07/2003 02:31 PM -----



<marguerite@turcopolier.com>

10/07/2003 01:31 PM
Please respond to
marguerite

To: <jackie.henderson@ci.alexandria.va.us>
cc:
Subject: City of Alexandria Website Contact Us - EMail for Jackie M. Henderson (jackie.henderson@ci.alexandria.va.us)



Time: [Tue Oct 07, 2003 13:31:55] IP Address: [68.49.226.187]

Response requested:

First Name: Marguerite

Last Name: Lang

Street Address: 14 West Rosemont Avenue

City: Alexandria

State: VA

Zip: 22301

Phone: 703-684-6534

Email Address: marguerite@turcopolier.com

Comments: (Please distribute this to the members of the Planning Commission for the hearing of Oct.7, 2003). Thank you.

RE: Special Use Permit #2003-0074
6 West Masonic View Avenue
Child Care Center

To: The Members of Planning Commission

26

Kathy Wilson of Abracadabra Child Care and Development Center presented and answered question about the revised plans for the expansion of the Center's playground to both the Rosemont Citizens Association's Executive Board and to the membership at our general meeting in September. The plans were very well received and the members were supportive of the goals of the innovative playground. We are also appreciative that the plans were revised from the original to include more open space on Commonwealth Avenue and screening of the playground with shrubs.

In conclusion The Rosemont Citizens Association supports the request for an SUP to expand the playground and to increase the number of children at the Abracadabra.

Marguerite L Lang
President, Rosemont Citizens Association

October 7, 2003

Members of the Planning Commission,

My name is Dan Pattarini. I am a City resident and a parent of a child at Abracadabra Child Care and Development Center. I am here this evening to urge the Commission to approve the special use permit submitted by Abracadabra. Having reviewed the permit I am greatly impressed by the thorough nature of the review and recommendations given to the Commission by staff members. Their understanding of development and planning is inspiring.

As the Commission considers this issue, I ask you to consider several very important factors not addressed by the Staff in their analysis of this request. In doing so I believe that you will be led to the overwhelming conclusion that the benefits of approving the request truly dwarf any foreseeable problems. Planning, by nature, is forward looking. So in that spirit I ask you to imagine the impact that your decision will have on the lives of not only the parents, staff, students and neighbors of Abracadabra, but also on the lives of all Alexandrians.

When the Abracadabra playground is expanded, motorists along Commonwealth Avenue glancing at the area will be amazed. Their amazement will not stem from the understandable, yet all too common concern born of watching beautiful green space torn asunder to make way for the asphalt, concrete, steel and bricks of commercial development. Neighbors of the center will be taken aback, but not by noise, trash, or the loss of green space.

When the Abracadabra playground is expanded motorists, neighbors, citizens across the city and even Planning Commission members will be amazed by the absolutely incredible design of the site. The playground will be a beautiful space that fits harmoniously into its surroundings. Friends, neighbors and community members will be taken aback when they learn that the playground, as an extension of the Center, will be one of the best examples of quality in early childhood development anywhere in the nation. Anyone passing the space will recognize its unique quality and, if they spend any time examining the new playground, they will wish and perhaps work to bring such wonderful opportunities to all children.

And in reality, this request is not about a playground, it is about children. In weighing the loss of a few hundred square feet of grass versus the creation of generations of healthy, happy, and well developed children, the choice is quite clear. In their analysis of this request, the City staff does a good job at pointing out the visual impact of the expanded playground. They point to the loss of green space as a real, not an abstract issue. However, if the goal of the Commission is to encourage development in Alexandria which allows the City to reach its greatest potential, I believe that the staff and the Commission would agree that the development of happy, healthy, and productive citizens is one the greatest outcomes of any decision they may make. The relationship between the implementation of this request and quality childhood development may also seem abstract. I assure you it is not. I urge you to make Alexandria's future brighter by approving the request.

Thank you.

SUP2003-0074

**John H. Sprinkle
603 Johnston Place
Alexandria, Virginia 22301
703-519-6112**

Thank you for the opportunity to support the consideration of a request for a special use permit to expand the playground at Abracadabra.

I am John H. Sprinkle and I live in Rosemont at 603 Johnston Place.

Over the last four years my wife and I have sent both of our sons to Abracadabra.

Our eldest son is now at Maury, where I serve as the Past President of the PTA.

We fully support the efforts of the Director, staff, and the school's Parental Advisory Board to expand and improve the Abracadabra playground.

As you know, within Alexandria, the Abracadabra program is widely recognized as a model program in early childhood education.

One of the reasons we chose Abracadabra for our children was the domestic setting of the facility—including the attached playground, that resembles many Rosemont backyards at homes with multiple children.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Respectfully submitted,



John H. Sprinkle

October 7, 2003