

## City of Alexandria, Virginia

## MEMORANDUM

DATE: JANUARY 18, 2007

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: RICH JOSEPHSON, ACTING DIRECTOR  
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING

RICH BAIER, DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

SUBJECT: CHILD CARE CENTER, 917 PRINCESS STREET (SUP#2006-0096)

A Special Use Permit request, SUP#2006-0096, for a child care center located at 917 Princess Street was considered and deferred at the December 16, 2006, City Council Public Hearing. The Council requested staff to work with the applicant and the neighborhood to resolve site related traffic and access issues. Following the Council hearing, staff worked with the applicant and developed drop-off/pick-up procedures to address the traffic and access concerns that had been raised. The plan included designating two child care staff to help with the morning drop-off and utilizing the alley between Princess Street and Oronoco Street for access to the child care center to minimize impacts to neighbors of the site.

At the January 9, 2007 Council meeting, staff presented this plan. The use of the alley between Princess Street and Oronoco Street raised other concerns by neighbors, relative to traffic and safety. As a result of these concerns, Council asked staff to meet with the neighbors and explore options that the neighborhood, applicant, and staff could agree would address the concerns indicated by the neighborhood.

On January 16, 2007, staff convened a meeting with neighbors, the applicant and representatives from the church, to provide information on the requested child care center, to describe a number of options for access to the child care center and to obtain feedback from neighbors on other possible options. There were 17 neighbors, three representatives from the church, the applicant and four City staff from Planning and Zoning and T&ES present at the meeting.

Staff discussed a new option for access to the child care center which involved entering the alley from Princess Street, using a portion of the alley extending to the north end of the church property and entering the church property by turning left into the church parking lot. Parents would then drop off their children, with assistance from staff of the child care center, and proceed out of the parking lot onto Princess Street via the small section of alley adjacent to the parking lot. The existing church driveways were to be widened and the existing fence relocated to accommodate the turns through the widened ingress/egress points.

There was lively discussion at the meeting regarding this option. Comments varied from encouraging the use of on street parking for drop off of children, similar to other child care centers that operate in the Old Town area, that parking on Patrick Street should be used for drop off, that use of the alley would, in effect, create a one-way street through the block, thereby creating a potential conflict with vehicles that want to exit via Princess Street, that use of the alley would create an unsafe condition for children walking along Princess Street, and that use of the alley would create an unsafe condition for vehicles entering Princess Street. One attendee commented about the number of vehicles that would be generated by the child care center.

After much discussion, there was consensus among those present at the meeting that the child care center should use the existing church parking lot, accessed by the short portion of the alley, for drop off and pick up of children, and that the center could operate under the following conditions:

- Access to the child care center will be from Princess Street to the church parking lot, using a short portion of the existing alley to gain access into the church parking lot. Parents would not be prohibited or discouraged from using available on street parking for drop off or pick.
- Parents will park in the lot and staff from the center will escort children into the building
- There would be no more than 60 children enrolled in the child care center
- Staff parking will be provided in an off-site lot owned by the church located at Pendleton and Payne Street
- Signage will be placed at the northwest corner of the alley and Princess Street at the exit from the parking lot to the alley indicating that vehicles exiting the church parking lot will be permitted to make a right turn only
- The gate and driveway apron connecting the church parking lot to the alley will be widened to accommodate vehicles entering the church parking lot

- There will be a meeting with the child care provider and the neighbors six months after approval of the Special Use Permit, in order to address any issues that have arisen in relation to the operation of the day care center, in addition to the normal one year review to determine compliance with all conditions of the SUP

With the above conditions, those in attendance at the meeting felt comfortable and wanted to give the child care center an opportunity to operate.

Please let us know if you have any questions concerning this request.

cc: Tom Culpepper, Deputy Director; Transportation & Environmental Services  
James K. Hartmann, City Manager



**Legend**

- Tax Parcel
- Residential
- X X X Fence
- Multi-Family
- Parking Lot
- Institutional