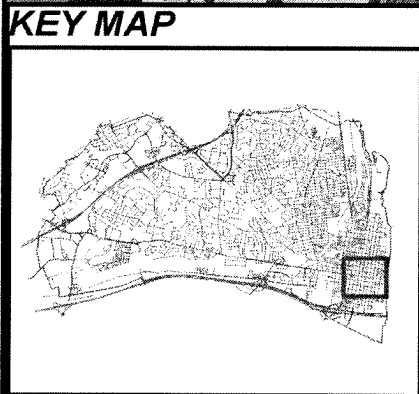


Docket Item #4
Special Use Permit #2010-0035
400, 418, and 418A South Washington Street

Application	General Data	
Request: Consideration of a request to operate a private academic school.	Planning Commission Hearing:	September 7, 2010
Address: 400, 418, and 418A South Washington Street	City Council Hearing:	September 25, 2010
Applicant: Alexandria Academy by Richard Seltzer	Zone: Small Area Plan:	CD/Commercial Downtown Old Town

Staff Recommendation: APPROVAL subject to compliance with all applicable codes and ordinances and the recommended permit conditions found in Section III of this report.
Staff Reviewers: Nathan Randall nathan.randall@alexandriava.gov



SUP #2010-0035

09/07/10



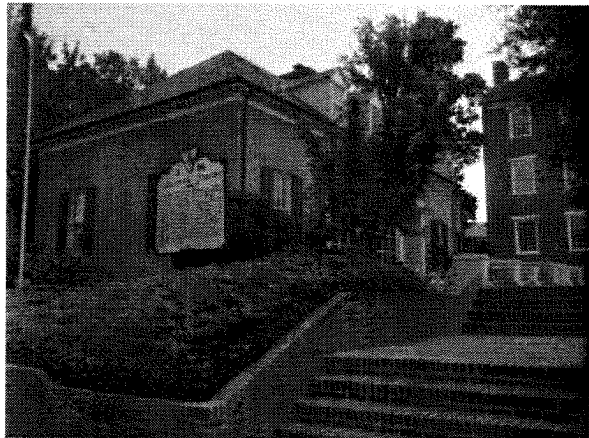
I. DISCUSSION

REQUEST

The applicant, Alexandria Academy by Richard Seltzer, requests special use permit approval for the operation of a private academic school located at 400 and 418 South Washington Street.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The subject site contains three lots of record. The main school site, and where classrooms will be located, is at the Campagna Center at 418 South Washington. This property has 90 feet of frontage on South Washington Street, 90 feet of depth and a total lot area of 8,100 square feet. School offices will be located next-door at 400 South Washington Street, which has approximately 65 feet of frontage of South Washington Street, 82 feet of frontage on Wolfe Street, and a total lot area of approximately 5,330 square feet. The site is developed with a two-story commercial building. Parking for the school will be located on the lot behind the Campagna Center at 418A South Washington Street, which is an irregular pipestem-shaped lot with approximately 18 feet of frontage on South Washington Street and a total lot area of 7,700 square feet.



The surrounding area is occupied by a mix of office, community and residential uses. A historic three-story building owned by the Historic Alexandria Foundation is located adjacent to the subject site to the northwest and is currently used for educational purposes. The Little Theater is also located immediately to the northwest. Residential townhouses are located to the east. Commercial uses, including retail and professional offices, are located to the south and west.

BACKGROUND

The immediate area has long been used for educational and community-serving purposes. The historic three-story building at 604 Wolfe Street, immediately adjacent to the current subject site, was the site of the original Alexandria Academy, which was founded by George Washington and other Alexandria citizens in 1785. The original Academy was also notable for having offered

free tuition to some of its students. The building at 418 South Washington, known today as the Campagna Center, was originally constructed in 1870 and served as a school for many years prior to 1980.

On October 9, 1980, the Board of Zoning Appeals approved a parking variance (BZA#2014) for a community building at 418 South Washington. On November 15, 1980, City Council approved SUP#1354 for the operation of the community building. Community service uses have continued at the building since that time, though today the building is used primarily for offices for community and social service programs, such as Head Start, that are administered by the Campagna Center.

The subject site was originally one large parcel but reached its current property configuration through subdivision requests approved in the early 1980s.

A small school of up to 20 students has been approved at the site as a permitted use, allowing the school to open in early September. Since the near-term goal is to offer instruction for up to 48 students, and since the Special Use Permit from 1980 only included a community building and not a private academic school, the applicant has applied for this SUP request.

PROPOSAL

The applicant proposes to operate a private academic school for up to 48 students. The school will offer a classics-based educational program as well as extra-curricular activities and athletics. Initially the school will serve only Grades 5-8. The school will occupy 1,440 square feet in two classrooms on the bottom floor of the Campagna Center and will also use the Center's dining and kitchen facilities on the second floor for student lunch periods. The Campagna Center offices that are currently in the bottom floor space will move to the lower level of the 400 South Washington building. Administrative offices and a faculty lounge for the Alexandria Academy will be located on the second and third stories of the 400 South Washington building.

Students will be supervised at all times, including during breaks and times of pick-up and drop-off, which will occur on Wolfe Street in a designated zone. Although private schools are not required to be licensed in order to operate in Virginia, the applicant intends to apply for private accreditation when the school opens. Additional details of the proposal are as follows:

Hours:	8:00am to 3:15pm, Monday-Friday (Instruction) 3:15pm to 5:00pm, Monday-Friday (Extra Curricular Activities)
Pick Up/Drop Off Hours:	7:00am to 9:00am, Monday-Friday 3:00pm to 6:00pm, Monday-Friday
Students:	Up to 48 students
Faculty & Staff:	8 employees

Noise: Teachers will control classroom noise. Students will be supervised at all times.

Trash/Litter: Approximately two trash bags of typical office/school paper waste and lunch food wrappers will be collected daily by Campagna Center staff.

PARKING AND PICK-UP/DROP-OFF

According to Section 8-200 (A)(11) of the Zoning Ordinance, the school requires one parking space for every 25 classroom seats. A school with up to 48 seats will be required to provide two off-street parking spaces. The applicant exceeds its parking requirement with the use of eight spaces in the parking lot behind the Campagna Center.

The applicant received approval from the Traffic & Parking Board on July 26, 2010 for the exclusive use of three parking spaces during the hours of 7:00am to 9:00am and 3:00pm to 6:00pm for student pick up and drop off. The spaces are located on the 600 block of Wolfe Street to the side of the 400 South Washington building.

ZONING/MASTER PLAN DESIGNATION

The subject property is located in the CD / Commercial Downtown zone. Section 4-503(U) of the Zoning Ordinance allows a private academic school of more than 20 students in the CD zone only with a special use permit.

The proposed use is consistent with the Old Town Small Area Plan chapter of the Master Plan which designates the property for commercial use.

II. STAFF ANALYSIS

Staff supports the applicant's request to operate a private academic school in this location. The school will be a community-serving use, both as an educational institution generally and given its goal of providing free tuition to some students. The retention of certain elements of the historic Alexandria Academy, such as its name, evokes the unique character and history of Old Town and of the City of Alexandria.

The school is compatible with the historic use of the site and is not expected to negatively impact the surrounding neighborhood, especially given its small size. Staff also believes that the use will be compatible with the existing uses at the Campagna Center, particularly given that students will be under strict supervision at all times. In fact, the swapping of office space between the parties appears to be mutually beneficial. The applicant has included a statement of support from the Director of the Campagna Center, Karen Hughes, in its application materials.

Staff has reviewed parking and the pick-up and drop-off of students at the school and found that the applicant's proposal is sufficient on both points. Although the technical parking requirement is only two parking spaces, the applicant has obtained from the Campagna Center the use of eight spaces in total, which is enough parking for its entire staff. He has also indicated that he is in the process of identifying additional potential parking spaces in case the Academy wishes to have additional spaces. The matter of student pick-up and drop-off is largely addressed through the availability of three dedicated on-street loading spaces on the 600 block of Wolfe Street. Staff has also included condition language requiring the applicant to submit a pick-up and drop-off plan that will generally provide additional details and, if achievable, may include a provision for staggered pick-up and drop-off times to prevent the bunching of cars in the loading spaces at any one time. Staff is also requiring in Condition #4 that the applicant inform parents of the approved pick-up and drop-off procedures in its orientation materials.

Staff has also included several standard conditions of approval in Section III of this report, including a one-year staff review. Staff recommends approval of the Special Use Permit request.

III. RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS

Staff recommends **approval** subject to compliance with all applicable codes and ordinances and the following conditions:

1. The special use permit shall be granted to the applicant only or to any corporation in which the applicant has a controlling interest. (P&Z)
2. The maximum student enrollment at the school shall not exceed 48. (P&Z)
3. The applicant shall provide a drop off and pick up plan for approval by the Directors of Planning & Zoning and Transportation & Environmental Services. The plan must be approved prior to school enrollment exceeding 20 students. (P&Z) (T&ES)
4. The applicant shall notify parents of the requirements of the pick-up and drop-off plan in all orientation materials. (P&Z)
5. The applicant shall conduct employee training sessions on an ongoing basis, including as part of any employee orientation, to discuss all SUP provisions and requirements, and on how to prevent underage sales of alcohol. (P&Z)
6. Trash and garbage shall be placed in sealed containers which do not allow odors to escape and shall be stored inside or in closed containers which do not allow invasion by animals. No trash or debris shall be allowed to accumulate on site outside of those containers. (P&Z)
7. All loudspeakers shall be prohibited from the exterior of the building, and no amplified sounds shall be audible at the property line. (T&ES)

8. The applicant shall require its employees who drive to use off-street parking and/or provide employees who use mass transit with subsidized bus and rail fare media. The applicant shall also post DASH and Metrobus schedules on-site for employees. (T&ES)
9. The applicant shall contact the Community Relations Unit of the Alexandria Police Department at 703-838-4520 regarding a security assessment for all areas of the school property. (Police)
10. The Director of Planning and Zoning shall review the special use permit after it has been operational for one year, 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 which were not corrected immediately, constitute repeat violations or which create a direct and immediate adverse zoning impact on the surrounding community; (b) the director has received a request from any person to docket the permit for review as the result of a complaint that rises to the level of a violation of the permit conditions, 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: Barbara Ross, Deputy Director, Department of Planning and Zoning;
Nathan Randall, Urban Planner.

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.

IV. CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Transportation & Environmental Services:

- R-1 All loudspeakers shall be prohibited from the exterior of the building, and no amplified sounds shall be audible at the property line.(T&ES)
- R-2 Provide a drop off and pick up plan for T&ES approval. The plan must be approved prior to school enrollment exceeding 20 students. (T&ES)
- R-3 The applicant shall require its employees who drive to use off-street parking and/or provide employees who use mass transit with subsidized bus and rail fare media. The applicant shall also post DASH and Metrobus schedules on-site for employees. (T&ES)
- C-1 The applicant shall comply with the City of Alexandria's Solid Waste Control, Title 5, Chapter 1, which sets forth the requirements for the recycling of materials (Sec. 5-1-99). (T&ES)
- In order to comply with this code requirement, the applicant shall provide a completed Recycling Implementation Plan (RIP) Form within 60 days of City Council approval. Contact the City's Recycling Program Coordinator at (703) 519-3486, or via e-mail at commercialrecycling@alexandriava.gov, for information about completing this form.
- C-2 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. (T&ES)

Code Enforcement:

- C-1 Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-2 Before a building permit can be issued on any proposed future alterations, a certification is required from the owner or owner's agent that the building has been inspected by a licensed asbestos inspector for the presence of asbestos (USBC 112.1.4).
- C-3 The developer shall provide a building code analysis with the following building code data on the plan: a) use group; b) number of stories; c) type of construction; d) floor area per floor ; e) fire protection plan.
- C-4 A revised fire prevention code permit is required for the proposed increase in operations.

- C-5 When a change of use requires a greater degree of structural strength, fire protection, exit facilities or sanitary provisions, a construction permit is required.
- C-6 Prior to the application for new Certificate of Occupancy, the applicant shall submit a building permit for a change of use. Drawings prepared by a licensed architect or professional engineer shall accompany the permit application. These plans shall show provide existing conditions, construction type data, and a plot plan. In addition, these plans shall show proposed conditions and provide data by the design professional which details how the proposed use will comply with the current edition of the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code for the new use in the area of structural strength, means of egress, passive and active fire protection, heating and ventilating systems, handicapped accessibility and plumbing facilities.
- C-7 A Certificate of Use of Occupancy is required prior to opening.
- C-8 Required exits, parking, and accessibility within the building for persons with disabilities must comply with USBC Chapter 11.
- C-9 Alterations to the existing structure and/or installation and/or altering of equipment therein requires a building permit. Five sets of plans, bearing the signature and seal of a design professional registered in the Commonwealth of Virginia, must accompany the written application. The plans must include all dimensions, construction alterations details, kitchen equipment, electrical, plumbing, and mechanical layouts and schematics.

BAR:

- F-1 418 South Washington Street is located in the Old and Historic Alexandria Historic District and is under the jurisdiction of the Old and Historic Alexandria Board of Architectural Review (BAR). The two-story-plus-basement brick building was constructed circa 1870 as a school building. The application is for a private academic school use at 418 South Washington Street as well as the transfer of administrative offices currently located in 418 South Washington to the one-story brick building at 400 South Washington Street/620 Wolfe Street (built circa 1955). While no exterior alterations to either building are discussed with this application, the applicant is reminded that any exterior changes to the buildings visible from a public-right-of-way, including but not limited to new signage, window replacements, roofing or siding materials replacement, fencing, exterior light fixtures, and any exterior demolition or encapsulation greater than 25 square feet requires approval by the Board of Architectural Review. It is the applicant's responsibility to inform BAR Staff should such issues develop.

Health Department:

- C-1 An Alexandria Health Department Permit is required for all regulated facilities. Permits are not transferable.

- C-2 A Certified Food Manager must be on duty during all hours of operation.
- C-3 Permits must be obtained prior to operation.
- C-4 Five sets of plans must be submitted to and approved by this department prior to construction.
- C-5 This facility must meet state and city Social Services requirements for air and floor space, toilet facilities, separate isolation room for sick children, lighting, temperature, storage for cots, clothing. Other items may be required by state or city codes.
- C-6 If food preparation or food handling is done on the premises, five sets of plans of the food handling areas are to be submitted to the Health department for approval.
- C-7 This facility must meet commercial standards (13 or more). Plans must comply with Alexandria City Code, Title 11, Chapter 2, Food and Food Establishments. A \$200.00 fee is required for review of plans for food facilities.
- C-8 If enrollment is kept to a maximum of 12 children at any one time, the facility may use home-style (semi-public restaurant) standards for food service.

Parks and Recreation:

- F-1 No Comment

Police Department:

- R-1 The applicant is to contact the Community Relations Unit of the Alexandria Police Department at 703-838-4520 regarding a security assessment for the two large classrooms on the ground floor of the Campagna Center and the Academy's three-story administrative building.



APPLICATION

SPECIAL USE PERMIT

SPECIAL USE PERMIT # 2010-0035

PROPERTY LOCATION: 400, 418 and 418A S. Washington Street

TAX MAP REFERENCE: 074.04.10.02 **ZONE:** CD

APPLICANT:

Name: Alexandria Academy

Address: 400 S Washington Street

PROPOSED USE: Private independent school

THE UNDERSIGNED, hereby applies for a Special Use Permit in accordance with the provisions of Article XI, Section 4-11-500 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 staff and Commission Members to visit, inspect, and photograph the building premises, land etc., connected with the application.

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 IV, Section 4-1404(D)(7) 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 Director of Planning and Zoning 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.

Richard Seltzer
Print Name of Applicant or Agent

R. Seltzer 6/22/10
Signature Date

400 S Washington Street
Mailing/Street Address

703.535.5533 703.535.5594
Telephone # Fax #

Alexandria, VA 22314
City and State Zip Code

rseltzer@alexandria-academy.org
Email address

ACTION-PLANNING COMMISSION: _____	DATE: _____
ACTION-CITY COUNCIL: _____	DATE: _____

PROPERTY OWNER'S AUTHORIZATION

As the property owner of Campagna Center, I hereby
(Property Address)
 grant the applicant authorization to apply for the private school use as
(use)
 described in this application.

Name: Karen R. Hughes

Phone: 703.549.0111x117

Please Print President & CEO

Address: 418 S Washington St.

Email: khughes@campagnacenter.org

Signature: *Karen R. Hughes*

Date: June 22, 2010

1. Floor Plan and Plot Plan. As a part of this application, the applicant is required to submit a floor plan and plot or site plan with the parking layout of the proposed use. The SUP application checklist lists the requirements of the floor and site plans. The Planning Director may waive requirements for plan submission upon receipt of a written request which adequately justifies a waiver.

Required floor plan and plot/site plan attached. (Attachments ^{A.O.} A-1, A-2, A-3)

Requesting a waiver. See attached written request.

2. The applicant is the (check one):

Owner

Contract Purchaser

Lessee or

Other: Contract User of the subject property.

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

The Fund for Classical Education, doing
business as Alexandria Academy, is
a Virginia registered not-for-profit
recognized by the IRS as a 501(c)(3).

OWNERSHIP AND DISCLOSURE STATEMENT
Use additional sheets if necessary

1. Applicant. 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. The term ownership interest shall include any legal or equitable interest held at the time of the application in the real property which is the subject of the application.

Name	Address	Percent of Ownership
1.	Please see Attachment	B-1
2.		
3.		

2. Property. State the name, address and percent of ownership of any person or entity owning an interest in the property located at 418 S Washington St (address), unless the entity is a corporation or partnership, in which case identify each owner of more than ten percent. The term ownership interest shall include any legal or equitable interest held at the time of the application in the real property which is the subject of the application.

Name	Address	Percent of Ownership
1. The Campaign Center	418 S. Washington	100%
2.	Please see Attachment	B-2
3.		

3. Business or Financial Relationships. Each person or entity listed above (1 and 2), with an ownership interest in the applicant or in the subject property is required to disclose any business or financial relationship, as defined by Section 11-350 of the Zoning Ordinance, existing at the time of this application, or within the 12-month period prior to the submission of this application with any member of the Alexandria City Council, Planning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals or either Boards of Architectural Review.

Name of person or entity	Relationship as defined by Section 11-350 of the Zoning Ordinance	Member of the Approving Body (i.e. City Council, Planning Commission, etc.)
1. - None -		
2.	Please See Attachments B-1 and B-2	
3.		

NOTE: Business or financial relationships of the type described in Sec. 11-350 that arise after the filing of this application and before each public hearing must be disclosed prior to the public hearings.

As the applicant or the applicant's authorized agent, I hereby attest to the best of my ability that the information provided above is true and correct.

6/22/10
Date

Richard Seltzer
Printed Name

R. S. Seltzer
Signature

Attachment B-1. Fund for Classical Education
Ownership and Disclosure Statement

1. Applicant

The Fund for Classical Education (doing business as Alexandria Academy) is a Virginia Registered not-for-profit recognized by the IRS as a 501 (c) (3). The Fund's Board of Directors include:

T.R Ahlstrom, Chair and CEO
37 Alexander Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
- No relationship as defined by Section
11-350 of the Zoning Ordinance

Nelson Ford, Director
2000 Corporate Ridge
McLean, VA 22103
- No relationship as defined by Section
11-350 of the Zoning Ordinance

George Crammer, Director
15 London End Beaconsfield
Bucks HP9 2HN
United Kingdom
- No relationship as defined by Section
11-350 of the Zoning Ordinance

Vigen Guroian, Director
19136 Canterbury Ct
Culpeper, VA 22701
- No relationship as defined by Section
11-350 of the Zoning Ordinance

The Honorable Ronald Klink, Director
101 Constitution Avenue
Washington, DC 20001
- No relationship as defined by Section
11-350 of the Zoning Ordinance

Attachment B-2. The Campagna Center, Inc.
Ownership and Disclosure Statement

2. Property Owner

The Campagna Center, Inc. is a Virginia Registered not-for-profit corporation. The Campagna Center's Board of Directors includes:

Karen R Hughes, President & CEO
418 S Washington Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

- No relationship as defined by Section 11-350 of the Zoning Ordinance

Joan Holtz, Chair
8405 Greensboro Dr #700
McLean, VA 22102

- No relationship as defined by Section 11-350 of the Zoning Ordinance

Marcia Call, Vice Chair
101 West Uhler Terrace
Alexandria, VA 22301

- No relationship as defined by Section 11-350 of the Zoning Ordinance

Michael Gaffney, Treasurer
3806 Col Ellis Avenue
Alexandria, VA 22304

- No relationship as defined by Section 11-350 of the Zoning Ordinance

Attachment D. Narrative Description

3. The Fund for Classical Education is planning to re-open George Washington's Alexandria Academy. The original Academy was established in 1785 in the historical building located at 604 Wolfe Street. The new school will be formally called, Alexandria Academy – The Washington Latin School in the City of Alexandria, or for short, Alexandria Academy.

For the Academy's classrooms, an agreement has been reached with the Campagna Center where the Academy will use two large former classrooms on the ground floor of the Campagna Center (418 So. Washington Street) and, in exchange, the Campagna Center will use the lower level offices in the Academy's administrative building (located in the former Alexandria Chamber of Commerce building, 400 So. Washington Street) to house a group of its staff. To meet the City's zoning requirements, the Academy is submitting this Special Use Permit to allow a portion of the Campagna Center to be used as a Private Academic School.

The three-story Campagna Center has an approximate total of 15,048 square feet. The two classrooms to be used by the Academy will have a combined total of 1,440 square feet (7.6%). The Academy's three-story administrative building has an approximate total of 7,965 square feet. The lower level offices to be used by the Campagna Center will have a combined total of 918 square feet (11.5%).

Alexandria Academy is a not-for-profit organization recognized by the IRS as a 501 (c) (3). Since this will be the first year of the Academy's operation, the Academy has targeted recruiting students in grades five through eight. While student recruitment will be on-going throughout the summer and early fall, it is expected the school will begin with approximately twenty students and perhaps as many as forty students. As was the case for George Washington's Alexandria Academy, the new Academy will include both paying students and "free-scholar" students. The Academy has worked with the Campagna Center and local churches to identify the "free-scholar" candidates. It is anticipated approximately twenty percent of the 2010/2011 students will be "free-scholars".

The Academy has hired five faculty members whose tenure with the Academy will begin in late August. Though per the City's zoning requirement, the Academy will have access

