

Docket Item #3
SPECIAL USE PERMIT #2005-0027

Planning Commission Meeting
June 7, 2005

ISSUE: Consideration of a request for a special use permit to allow a freestanding sign at an elementary school.

APPLICANT: Alexandria City Public Schools
by Mark Krause

LOCATION: 1115 Martha Custis Drive
Charles Barrett Elementary School

ZONE: RB/Residential Townhouse

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends **approval** subject to compliance with all applicable codes and ordinances and the recommended conditions found in Section III of this report.

SITE GRAPHIC
AVAILABLE IN THE PLANNING AND ZONING OFFICE

I. DISCUSSION

REQUEST

The applicant, Alexandria City Public Schools, by Mark Krause, requests special use permit approval to install a freestanding, changeable display sign at Charles Barrett Elementary School, 1115 Martha Custis Drive.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The subject property is one lot of record with approximately 1,444 feet of frontage on Martha Custis Drive/Valley Drive and 500 feet of frontage along East Glebe Road and a total lot area of 4.8 acres. The site is developed with the Charles Barrett Elementary School and recreational facilities. Access to the property is from Martha Custis Drive.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant proposes to install a freestanding, changeable display sign on Martha Custis Drive in front of the school (see attached location sketch). The sign will stand 6'8" above grade, and will be 6' in length. In this location, the proposed sign will be set back the required 10 feet from the front property line. The message will be changed manually by the school staff as needed to post announcements and events. The double faced sign will be mounted on a brick base and will not be illuminated (see attached drawing).



ZONING/MASTER PLAN DESIGNATION

The subject property is located in the RB/Townhouse zone. Section 3-702(I) of the Zoning Ordinance allows a public school in the RB zone. Section 9-201(A)(8) requires a special use permit for a school sign.

The proposed use is consistent with the North Ridge/ Rosemont Small Area Plan chapter of the Master Plan, which designates the property for institutional use.

II. STAFF ANALYSIS

The new sign is an attractive design and will provide better identification for the school. The proposed size and location of the sign does not affect the vision clearance. The proposed sign is similar in size, design and location to the sign erected at the George Washington Elementary School on Mount Vernon Avenue. Therefore, staff has no objection to the proposed sign at Charles Barrett Elementary School.

III. RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS

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

1. The design and location of the sign shall be limited to a design that is substantially similar to the sign proposed in the application.

STAFF: Eileen Fogarty, Director, Department of Planning and Zoning;
Richard Josephson, Deputy Director;
Mary Christesen, Planning Technician.

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:

F-1 No comment.

Code Enforcement:

C-1 A construction permit is required for the proposed project.

Health Department:

F-1 No comment.

Police Department:

F-1 The Police Department has no objections to the elementary school erecting a free standing sign.

Parks and Recreation:

F-1 No comment.

SUP#2005-0027
1115 Martha Custis Drive

**REPORT ATTACHMENTS
AVAILABLE IN THE PLANNING AND ZONING OFFICE**