



# Memorandum

**TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND  
CITY COUNCIL**

**FROM: Councilmember Foley**

**SUBJECT: THE HARKER SCHOOL (PD18-040)    DATE: March 9, 2020**

Approved

Date

3/9/20

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That City Council approve the staff recommendation and approve the Planned Development Permit (PD18-040) for The Harker School expansion project, with the following amendments:

1. Condition 11 - Neighborhood Coordination:
  - a. The Harker School Communication Plan will include a 1500ft radius for mailing communication, and a posting on the School web site. Additionally, the Applicant will maintain a list for electronic communication and will include anyone interested in receiving updates.
  - b. Prior to construction, the school shall send a one-time mailer to all properties in the area between Highway 85, Bascom Avenue, Camden Avenue and Leigh, inviting neighbors to subscribe to the Harker mailing or emailing list. The school shall maintain a mailing list and email list of neighborhood residents that would like to be kept informed of school activities, including special events.
  - c. The Harker School (Applicant) will conduct community meetings:
    - i. Spring; (prior to construction), Fall 2020 (update), Spring 2021 (prior to operation)
    - ii. During the first year of operations as a middle school, the Applicant will host community meetings: October 2021, January 2022, April 2022
    - iii. Following the first year of operation meetings will commence annually, during the Fall semester.
  - d. Amend condition 11 to include: The Applicant will communicate preferred transportation routes to their families prior to each semester (including Summer session).

2. Permit Conditions:

- a. Amend condition 10 to include: The Applicant using the Communication Plan, will communicate 12 special event dates annually, prior to the school year. Any amendments to the special event calendar will be communicated with the neighborhood 60 days prior to the proposed change.
- a. The Applicant will review the start times of neighboring schools in the area and determine a time between 8:00am and 8:30am that will result in minimal impact to the community. This time will be reviewed annually to offset any changes at the neighboring schools.”
- b. Condition 15: The Applicant will conduct counts of the number of pedestrians entering and exiting the site. Such counts will be conducted four times per year for the lifetime of the project, and will be posted on the School’s web site and transmitted electronically.
- c. Any window on floor two, facing the neighborhood in the academic building, will be constructed of obscured glass from the classroom floor to a minimum 7ft in height.
- d. Trees will be planted between the newly constructed academic building and the property line to create a natural privacy screen, and obstruct the view of the building from the neighboring homes. Trees will be a minimum 15ft in height prior to planting.
- e. All outdoor lighting will be LED, and equipped with motion sensor, or similar technology, to allow for dimming when no motion is present.

3. Transportation:

- a. Add a condition to include the installation of a crosswalk at the intersection of Union Avenue and Barrett Avenue prior to the operation as a middle school, to provide a safe route to cross Barrett Avenue.
- b. Add a condition to include the completion of a traffic analysis prior to construction for Barrett Avenue, and Jackson Drive. The traffic analysis will capture speed and 24-hour volume data. The traffic analysis should occur Monday-Thursday, during the academic school year. Any further traffic analysis will be completed at the discretion of the Director.

**ANALYSIS**

At the Director’s Hearing in November 2019, there was concern raised by members of the immediate neighborhood surrounding the proposed improvement of The Harker School site located on Union Avenue. My office began outreaching to members of the community almost immediately, and met with both residents and The Harker School to increase communications between the two parties involved, work towards a common ground, and begin to lay a foundation of trust.

When we met with the neighborhood earlier this year, there was an understandable concern from the neighborhood. In 2012, the school had been permitted to accommodate 600 students at this site, but due to a delay in plans, The Harker School, had only been occupied as a pre-school for

125 children, not 600 middle-school aged students. Additionally, there were plans to improve the site with the addition of two 2-story structures; an educational building (classrooms), and an auditorium/gymnasium. These structures were taller, and greater in mass than others currently on the site.

Throughout the course of this process, I met several times with residents, members of the immediate neighborhood, and Harker School staff. These meetings were essential and provided the foundation for the amendments contained within this memorandum. I would like to thank both the Harker School staff and particularly the neighboring residents, many of whom took time away from their jobs and families to work on this issue and attend multiple meetings to ensure the success of the project.