

Parks, Timothy

From: Firchow, Kevin
Sent: Tuesday, May 18, 2010 12:12 PM
To: Murphy, Brad; Stouder, Heather; Parks, Timothy
Subject: FW: Conditional Use Alteration 602 Everglade Drive

Importance: High

From: Brian Anderson [Brian.Anderson@wilmic.com]
Sent: Monday, May 17, 2010 12:52 PM
To: Firchow, Kevin
Cc: St Ambrose Academy
Subject: Conditional Use Alteration 602 Everglade Drive

Attention Kevin Firchow:

I am a resident of 605 Everglade Drive, a residential property that is located directly across the street from St Thomas Church/St. Ambrose Academy. I am unavailable to attend the public hearing scheduled for May 24th regarding the proposal to increase the student capacity of St. Ambrose Academy School, as I will be out of town for work that night. I wanted to express my concern and opposition to the further expansion of St. Ambrose Academy.

It was approximately 5 years ago that this school opened at St. Thomas Aquinas Church. I, along with other neighbors expressed concern about the use of this church as a school at that time. The school officials involved with the founding of St. Ambrose assured the neighborhood that this would be a very small school with the projected attendance of around 20 students. The school officials promised that if the attendance ever increased to near the 60 person student capacity provided by the conditional use granted, they would need to find a different location for the school. I have now been informed that St. Ambrose school wants to increase its capacity by well over 100% of the maximum student capacity allotted, yet stay in the same location.

St. Thomas is not set up for a school of any size. This "school" has no playground, resulting in the students running around the church parking lot and/or using the adjacent City of Madison public neighborhood park for its recess. The Old Sauk-Everglade road area is already very busy with traffic. A "school" at this location with 140 students will only further congest this difficult traffic situation and create an unreasonable burden on its tax-paying neighbors. How long will it be before this "school" decides to again mislead the neighborhood and requests to double its size, if the alteration to the conditional use is granted? What efforts has the "school" made to find a different venue that could better serve a school of this size?

The 60 student capacity previously granted by the City represented a reasonable accommodation to allow this "school" to operate in this church. St. Ambrose school at its present size already represents a burden on the neighborhood in terms of noise and increased traffic it has created. To increase the size of this "school" as requested represents an unreasonable burden on the neighborhood.

On its website St. Ambrose proudly boasts about the fact that it "continues to grow at double digit rates". If St. Ambrose wants to grow and attract more students it needs to find a location better suited to accommodate its growing student body. Allowing St. Ambrose to obtain an alteration to the conditional use so soon after it was originally granted would set

Stouder, Heather

From: Jerry E. McAdow [jmcadow@lathropclark.com]
Sent: Friday, May 21, 2010 10:43 AM
To: Stouder, Heather
Subject: FW: Traffic Operation Plan
Attachments: 0268_001.pdf

Hi Heather:

This a pdf of our "traffic operations plan". This is what the Academy gives to each parent as instructions for dropping off and picking up students. Thank you for getting this into the PC packet.

Jerry



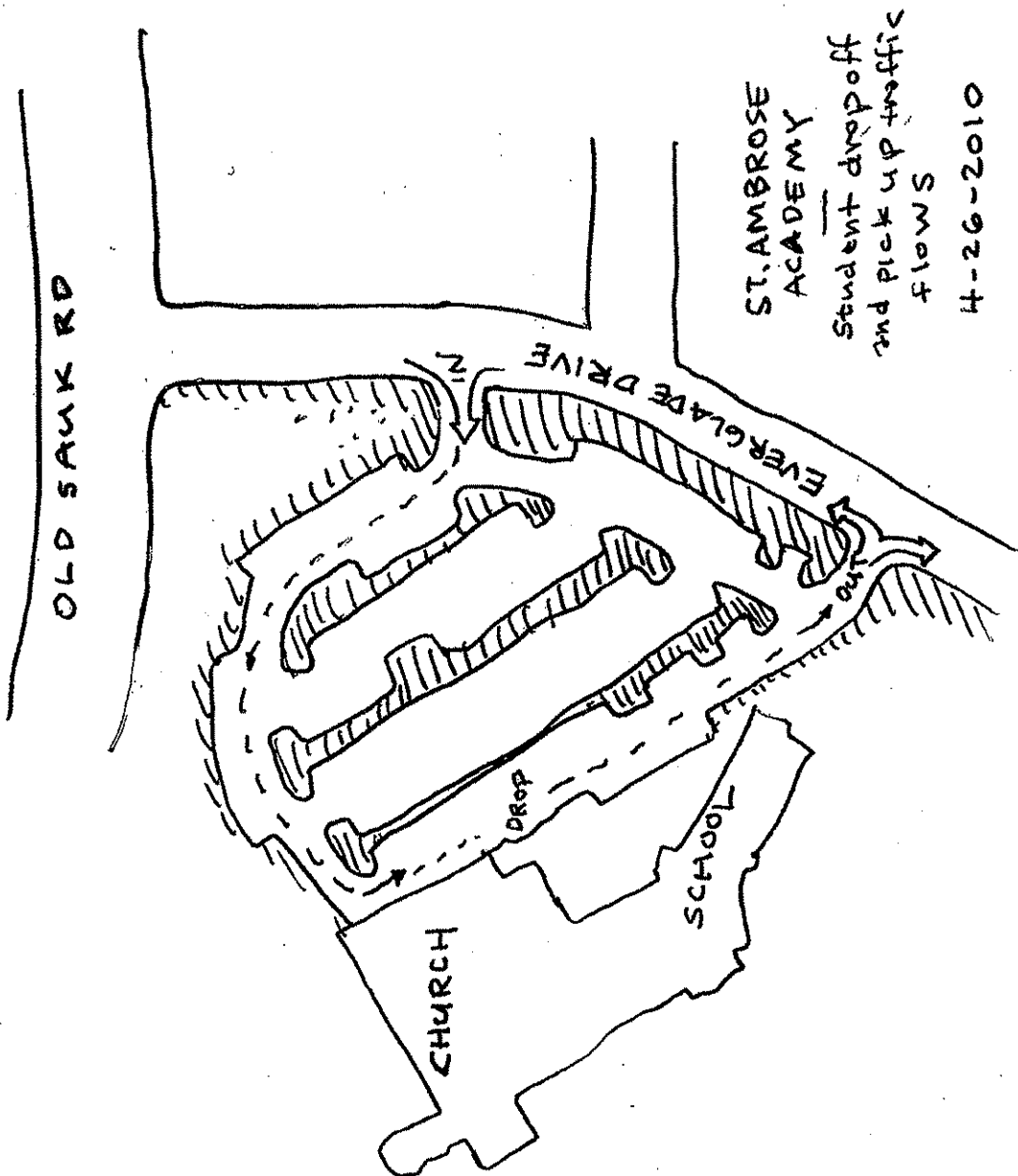
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ST. AMBROSE
ACADEMY
Student dropoff
and pick up traffic
flows
4-26-2010

From: Clear, Mark
Sent: Friday, May 21, 2010 11:02 AM
To: Firchow, Kevin
Cc: Murphy, Brad
Subject: 602 Everglade Conditional use alternation comments (Item 5)

Hi Kevin,

Sorry for the very late comments on this item.

I've attached comments I've received from neighbors via e-mail.

A neighborhood meeting was held on 4/29/10, attended by about 15 people. Roughly half were supportive and the other half had concerns about traffic and use of Everglade Park.

My recommendation is that plan commission grant the conditional use alteration to increase the school enrollment cap to 140 with an additional condition that the applicant will not seek another increase in the future.

Thanks, and have a great weekend!
Alder Mark Clear, 19th District
Common Council President, Madison, WI
district19@cityofmadison.com
608-695-5709

Greetings Mark,

I have no problem with this expansion. It probably would be a good idea to send a notice to the affected residents in the 9th district (although I don't think anybody would object). I will try to attend, depending upon my meeting and work schedule.

Good luck.

alder paul skidmore

We fully support the expansion of the academy at St. Thomas Aquinas.
We are former members of the parish still living in the area. I was the building committee chair for the mid 90's expansion project which now allows this school to exist. If you have any questions relative to the facility, I'd be glad to help in nay way I can.
Steve

--

Steve & Julie Harms
6801 Colony Drive
Madison, WI 53717

Mark,

Is this a done deal? I have a lot of questions and some serious reservations about this expansion, especially since they promised it would not exceed 60 when they first proposed it to the neighborhood.

Thanks,

Marsha Sheppard
313 Yosemite Trail

Thanks for the note. I have no issues with their plans and would probably support without reservation anything they want to do there. It is certainly a refreshing change from the plans of Dirty Dog Saloon and the other tavern/bar proposals on the other side of the neighborhood.

Thanks!

Tim Cole
122 S. Yellowstone Dr.

Mark, I cannot make the meeting on Thursday due to another engagement. But I am in full support of St. Ambrose's expansion. I think having a healthy and quality to Madison Schools is important. Also, as a member of St. Thomas I think the expansion adds to the vitality of the church community.

Thanks,

Michael Walters.
6309 Old Sauk Rd.

Dear Alder Clear,

We plan to attend tomorrow's neighborhood meeting to discuss the request submitted by St. Thomas Aquinas church to expand and increase the enrollment at St. Ambrosius Academy. Our address is 6901 Old Sauk Ct. My wife has owned the property adjacent to the church since 1999. In the ten years since she moved there, there have been a number of changes to the property in the space between our home and the west side of the church. Each subsequent change has had some impact on us as homeowners. Generally, we have been cooperative. The most recent change was about two years ago, when the church erected a single story storage shed/garage unit (24'x24'). We were notified prior to building, and we did call and ask some questions, but did not pursue any other process to impede the construction. With our approval, the church avoided the need to obtain Planning Commission approval and unnecessary administrative processes.

We, along with many of our neighbors, do share concerns about this most recent proposal. We feel that it would negatively impact the neighborhood-particularly traffic and use of our street, Old Sauk Ct, and render it a thoroughfare to access the church and the school.

We would like to schedule a meeting with you, if possible, in the following two weeks to discuss this further. We'd also like to bring to your attention several issues particularly related to the traffic volume and increasingly dangerous parking situation on Old Sauk Ct.

We can be reached by reply e-mail or by phone at 833 5251. Otherwise, we'll touch base tomorrow at the neighborhood meeting.

Thanks for your time and attention to these matters. We look forward to meeting you.

Sincerely,

José J. Madera
Member, Madison Arts Commission (since Jan 2004)
Assistant Dean, College of Letters and Science
University of Wisconsin-Madison

Kimberly A Santiago
Member, Sister City Collaboration Committee (since May 2009)
Senior Development Officer, Morgridge Institute for Research
University of Wisconsin-Madison

Dear Mark:

Thank you for inviting us to attend the April 29, 2010 neighborhood meeting regarding the possible expansion of St. Ambrose Academy. We are unable to attend the meeting but have some concerns we would like to share with you.

We decided to buy a home in this area because it was a quiet neighborhood with minimal traffic congestion and noise. We are concerned that by expanding the St. Ambrose Academy to 140 students we be incurring more traffic and noise. Several students currently attending St. Ambrose stay at a neighbor's house until a parent calls for them. Other students have cars and come over to the neighbor's house for a few hours after school. As a result there is more traffic and noise in our immediate neighborhood.

Our understanding is that St. Thomas Aquinas School Hall was designed and built as a parish center that was not used on a daily basis. The School Hall is now being used as a private school with 60 students and the school is requesting approval to

have the enrollment raised to 140. At the time of the original conditional use for a school it was indicated that the school enrollment would not be raised beyond 60 students. We are concerned now that there is a request to more than double its size.

Thank you for listening to our concerns.

Sincerely,

Mike & Jean Terry

2 E. Spyglass Ct.

Mark,

What I believe to be important in St. Ambrose's request for an alteration to their CUP is the track record they've created over the past 7 years, opening in the fall of 2003 as I recall. Although I don't live across the street, I do check out the St. Thomas Aquinas parking lot when driving by during school hours. And judging by the number of vehicles, they appear to be keeping their promises and haven't generated the feared level of activity.

Back then, the neighborhood and Plan Commission needed to take Rob Marsland's and Patrick O' Loughlin's representations on faith. Now, their track record can speak for itself. Have their been complaints? Has St. Ambrose been sensitive to concerns of neighbors that may have surfaced in the past 5 years? Has St. Ambrose been a good neighbor?

Another perspective to view the extent to which accommodating St. Ambrose may be justified is the accomplishment of two of their students achieving PERFECT 1600 SAT scores. No doubt, plenty other measures are available. And, that's one that gets my attention, an indication that this organization forwards high educational values (no doubt easier when not accommodating a student body with 40% of the student body receiving special education support and 38% qualifying for the subsidizing lunches and breakfasts due to families below the poverty line, as Does JMM, all while enduring tighter budgets every year.)

The use of Everglade Park initially fueled my skepticism about their initial request, until staff pointed out that lots of Madison Schools use city parks, e.g. Olive Jones Park being the playground for Randall, Rennebohm Park for West High's soccer team, etc.) Unless the kids are smoking ciggies or dealing crack in the park, I don't believe any case can be made for discouraging their use of it for their phy. ed. program.

Rob Marsland, the director of St. Ambrose, said that while they would like to grow, they weren't sure they'd even survive. If they were successful, he promised to come back for neighborhood review, willing to go through the CUP process again rather than expect the aldermanic sign-off of a minor alteration.

Unless St. Ambrose has ignored neighborhood concerns or flouted the continuing authority

of Plan Commission over the past five years, I have a hard time imaging how one could justify not granting their requested alteration. Just try and administer a neighborhood meeting where you don't begin with that conclusion, as I'm sure you will!

Steve Holtzman (Former D19 Alder)
105 Glen Hwy

General Information

Name : Francis Diederich

Address : 6908 Old Sauk RD

City : Madison

State : WI

ZIP : 53717-1131

Phone : 608-662-9888

Work Phone : 608-712-6379

Email : frand@charter.net

Should we contact you?: Yes

Message :

Mark,

I am in favor of increasing ST. Albans enrollment cap to 160 students. I doubt the impact on traffic is going to have an irreparable impact on residents living in the Old Sauk RD/Evergreen area.

Fran Diederich