

PLANNING DIVISION STAFF REPORT

September 9, 2024



PREPARED FOR THE PLAN COMMISSION

Project Address: 208 East Olin Avenue (District 14, Alder Knox)
Legistar File ID #: [84819](#)
Prepared By: Lisa McNabola, AICP, Planning Division
Report Includes Comments from other City Agencies, as noted
Reviewed By: Kevin Firchow, AICP, Principal Planner

Summary

Applicant: Christine Geier; Madison Metropolitan School District; 1045 East Dayton Street, Madison, WI 53703

Contact: Cory DeGroff; Madison Metropolitan School District; 4711 Pflaum Road, Madison, WI 53718

Owner: Olin Center LLC c/o Colonial Property Management; 222 North Street; Madison, WI 53704

Requested Action: Consideration of a conditional use in the Suburban Employment (SE) District to allow a public school tenant in a portion of a multi-tenant office building at 208 East Olin Avenue.

Proposal Summary: The applicant proposes to operate a public school program for up to 20 students in a 2,850 square foot tenant space in an existing office building.

Applicable Regulations & Standards: Standards for conditional uses are found in MGO Section 28.183(6). Supplemental Regulations for schools, public and private are found in MGO Section 28.151. The subject site is located in Urban Design District 1 (no exterior modifications are being proposed at this time).

Review Required By: Plan Commission

Summary Recommendation: The Planning Division recommends that the Plan Commission find the approval standards for conditional uses are met and **approve** the request to allow a public school tenant in the Suburban Employment (SE) District at 208 East Olin Avenue. All recommendations are subject to input at the public hearing and the conditions recommended by the reviewing agencies.

Background Information

Parcel Location: The 126,600-square-foot (2.91-acre) parcel is located on the northside of East Olin Avenue between John Nolen Drive and Quann-Olin Parkway. It is located within District 14 (Alder Knox) and the Madison Metropolitan School District. It is also located in Urban Design District 1.

Existing Conditions and Land Use: The subject parcel is occupied by a 47,920 square foot, two-story, multi-tenant commercial building built in 1968 with an addition constructed in 1985. The site is in the Suburban Employment (SE) District.

Surrounding Land Use and Zoning:

Northeast: Railroad, zoned Conservancy (CN) District; John Nolen Drive;

Southeast: Two restaurant buildings, zoned Traditional Employment (TE) District; across East Olin Avenue, Alliant Energy Center, zoned Parks and Recreation (PR) District;

Southwest: Across East Olin Avenue, City of Madison facilities including Water Utility buildings, Streets Division buildings, and Quann Park, zoned PR District; and

Northwest: Two, two-story office buildings, zoned Suburban Employment (SE) District; Wingra Creek Bike Path, zoned CN District.

Adopted Land Use Plan: The [Comprehensive Plan](#) (2023) and [South Madison Plan](#) (2022) recommend Regional Mixed-Use (RMU) development for the subject property and the two adjacent properties. Surrounding properties are recommended for a mix of Special Institutional (SI) and Parks and Open Space (P) development.

Zoning Summary: The property is zoned Suburban Employment (SE) District.

Requirements	Required	Proposed
Lot Area (sq. ft.)	20,000 sq. ft.	126,620 sq. ft.
Lot Width	65'	405.0'
Front Yard Setback	0' or 5'	Adequate
Side Yard Setback	15 or 20% building height	Adequate
Rear Yard Setback	30'	Adequate
Maximum Lot Coverage	75%	Existing lot coverage
Minimum Building Height	22' measured to building cornice	2 story existing building
Maximum Building Height	5 stories/68'	2 story existing building

Site Design	Required	Proposed
Number Parking Stalls	No minimum required	Existing parking lot (See Comment 1)
Electric Vehicle Stalls	Not required	Existing parking lot
Accessible Stalls	Yes	Yes (See Comment 1)
Loading	Not required	None
Number Bike Parking Stalls	Schools- public and private: 1 space per 5 students (2)	45 (See Comment 1)
Landscaping and Screening	Not required	Existing landscaping
Lighting	Not required	Existing lighting
Building Form and Design	Not required	Existing building (See Comment 2)

Table Prepared by Jenny Kirchgatter, Assistant Zoning Administrator

Environmental Corridor Status: The subject site is not within a mapped environmental corridor.

Public Utilities and Services: This property is served by a full range of urban services.

Project Description, Analysis, and Conclusion

The applicant, Madison Metropolitan School District (MMSD), proposes to operate a public school program for up to 20 students in a 2,850 square foot tenant space in an existing office building. A public school is a conditional use in the Suburban Employment (SE) District. In 2016 the Plan Commission approved a conditional use for a public school in a second floor tenant space in this building. Operation of the public school ceased for more than one year, therefore approval of a new conditional use is required.

Per the letter of intent, the public school would provide an alternative learning environment for up to 20 students and four employees. There would be two half-day cohorts with up to 10 students in each. The proposed hours of operation are Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. with the first cohort on-site from 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and the second cohort from 12:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Transportation options are expected to include parent drop-off

and pick-up, public transportation, or cabs. Meals would be provided on-site. The tenant space would include three offices, one classroom, a lobby, and two restrooms.

The site is accessed off of East Olin Avenue and is cross connected with the adjacent property to the west. The portion of the parking lot on 208 East Olin Avenue has 170 parking stalls and 45 bike stalls. Parking is shared between the tenants. The bike stalls are located at the rear of the building. There are two public entries, one facing East Olin Avenue and one at the rear of the building.

Supplemental Regulations

Per MGO Section 28.151, schools, public and private are subject to the following Supplemental Regulations:

- a) A facility established after the effective date of this ordinance within a predominantly residential or mixed-use area shall have vehicular access to a collector or higher classification street.
- b) Where the use is conditional, an appropriate transition area between the use and adjacent property may be required, using landscaping, screening, and other site improvements consistent with the character of the neighborhood.

Staff believe the Supplemental Regulations are met.

Conditional Use Standards

The conditional use approval standards state that the Plan Commission shall not approve a conditional use without due consideration of the City's adopted plan recommendations, design guidelines, supplemental regulations, and finding that all of the conditional use standards of MGO §28.183(6) are met. Please note, recent changes to state law requires that conditional use findings must be based on "substantial evidence" that directly pertains to each standard and not based on personal preference or speculation.

The [Comprehensive Plan](#) (2023) and [South Madison Plan](#) (2022) recommend Regional Mixed-Use (RMU) development for the subject property and the two adjacent properties. Surrounding properties are recommended for a mix of Special Institutional (SI) and Parks and Open Space (P) development. RMU areas include existing and planned high-intensity centers supporting a variety of multifamily housing options and commercial activity serving the needs of the region. Staff believe the proposed use is generally consistent with the recommended land uses and note that schools are permitted in almost all of the mixed-use and commercial zoning districts.

Staff does not believe that establishing the proposed public school use in an exiting multi-tenant office building will have negative impacts on surrounding tenants or properties given the small number of students. If approved, the Plan Commission retains continuing jurisdiction over this conditional use, meaning that should complaints be filed, the Plan Commission could take further action on this conditional use as allowed in MGO §28.183(9)(d).

Staff believe the conditional use approval standards can be found met, subject to the recommended conditions of approval.

Recommendation

Planning Division Recommendation (Contact Lisa McNabola, 243-0554)

The Planning Division recommends that the Plan Commission find the approval standards for conditional uses are met and approve the request to allow a public school tenant in the Suburban Employment (SE) District at 208 East Olin Avenue. All recommendations are subject to input at the public hearing and the conditions recommended by the reviewing agencies.

Recommended Conditions of Approval Major/Non-Standard Conditions are Shaded

Zoning (Contact Jenny Kirchgatter, 266-4429)

1. Submit an updated parking summary with a count of vehicle stalls, accessible stalls, and bicycle stalls.
2. Submit an overall first floor plan, and identify the Madison Metropolitan School District tenant location with the first floor. Identify the various rooms within the school tenant space.
3. Per Section 28.186(4)(b), the property owner or operator is required to bring the property into compliance with all elements of the approved site plans by the date established by the Zoning Administrator as part of the site and building plan approval. Work with Zoning staff to establish a final site compliance date.
4. Signage approvals are not granted by the Plan Commission. Signage must be reviewed for compliance with Chapter 31 Sign Codes of the Madison General Ordinances and Chapter 33 Urban Design District ordinances. Signage permits are issued by the Zoning Section of the Department of Planning and Community and Economic Development.

Traffic Engineering (Contact Luke Peters, 266-6543)

5. "Stop" signs shall be installed at a height of seven (7) feet from the bottom of the sign at all class III driveway approaches, including existing driveways, behind the property line and noted on the plan. All directional/regulatory signage and pavement markings on the site shall be shown and noted on the plan.

Metro Transit (Contact Timothy Sobota, 261-4289)

6. Metro Transit operates eastbound-only daily all-day transit service along Olin Avenue opposite this property - with trips every 60 minutes.

Parking Utility (Contact Trent Schultz, 246-5806)

7. The agency reviewed this project and determined a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plan could be required as part of approving the proposed Conditional Use. Please specify the expected grades of students attending the proposed MMSD program. Elementary and middle school uses are currently exempt from the TDM Ordinance, per MGO 16.03(4)(d).

The following agencies reviewed the request and recommended no conditions of approval: Engineering Mapping, Fire Department, Parks Division, Water Utility, Engineering Division