

The Williamstown Youth Center

Application for Modification of Combined Special Permit & Development Plan Review (#2000-06)

21 April 2011

The Williamstown Youth Center offers this narrative in support of its application to the Zoning Board of Appeals for modification of the approved combined special permit and development plan review for the Williamstown Elementary School (#2000-06).

INTRODUCTION AND PROCEDURAL BACKGROUND

The Zoning Board of Appeals reviewed the Williamstown Elementary School project in early 2000, when it heard the Williamstown School Committee's application for Special Permits combined with Development Plan Review (#2000-06).

The Board approved the Development Plan and four special permits: for a Municipal use in a General Residence 1; to exceed the 15% impervious coverage within the Wellhead Protection Overlay District; to grant relief from the Development Standards for screening of off-street parking; and to grant relief from compliance with existing height regulations in accordance with Sections 70-3.3A.4, 70-7.4.E.22, 70-5.4.B.3.F, 70-8.4 and 70-4.1.A Code of the Town of Williamstown.

As described below, the Williamstown Youth Center proposes to make changes to the site plans and respectfully requests that the ZBA modify the combined special permit with development plan review to approve the enclosed plans.

WILLIAMSTOWN YOUTH CENTER

The Williamstown Youth Center (WYC) proposes an approximately 12,300 square feet, single story, building on the Elementary School site. The building will be sited south of the school and accessed from the school's south parking lot. The building will be situated immediately east of the sidewalk along the 'drop off' lane on grounds currently occupied by playground equipment, lawn and a baseball field.

The WYC is a private, non-profit, organization and defined as an 'educational use' per Mass General Law Ch40A, section 3, and is permitted by right.

The project requires Development Plan Review because of its size, disturbance limits, and because it is a modification of the overall Elementary School plan previously

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approved.

The project will also specifically modify the previously approved special permit for impervious coverage in the Wellhead Protection Overlay district. This will be described in detail later in the narrative. None of the other special permits previously granted will be affected.

Site improvements are limited for this project and primarily include some sidewalk improvements, new subsurface utilities, and the relocation of play equipment and ball fields. There is no additional parking proposed for this project as the school has sufficient parking to satisfy the Center's need (see section 6.1 below).

PERMITS REQUIRED

Williamstown Department of Public Works

The project will require a Driveway Entrance Permit for the temporary construction entrance proposed off of School Street. We will also need Water and Sewer Connection and Street Opening Permits for the new services to the building and their connections within School Street.

Williamstown Office of Inspection Services

The project will require a Trench Opening Permit for general site work excavation on the property exceeding 4' in depth. Naturally, a Building Permit will be required prior to start of building construction.

Williamstown Planning Board

The project requires a Parking Determination for the WYC use. This was previously performed by the Planning Board at their July 2009 meeting and is attached with this submittal.

The Planning Board must also determine that access to the building will be functionally equivalent to that which is required by the Subdivision Rules and Regulations. A letter and plan has been submitted to the Planning Board requesting this review.

Williamstown Zoning Board of Appeals

As mentioned previously, this project requires Modification of Special Permit and Development Plan Review of the Williamstown Elementary School project to include the proposed Williamstown Youth Center. All relevant documentation and calculations are included herein or attached.

APPLICABLE DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

The Scoping Letter attached and prepared by the Williamstown Office of Inspection

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Services outlined Development Standards applicable to this project. They are outlined below.

Section 5.3: Environmental Standards – 5.3.A through 5.3.C.3

Stormwater runoff from the new building and sidewalks is being managed through several methods. These methods include: overland flow on grass to existing lawn drainage structures, overland flow on pavement to existing parking drainage structures and collection by roof leader to subsurface infiltration areas.

The runoff from the proposed impervious areas is fairly clean in nature, being primarily from the roof and minimal new sidewalk areas. These improvements do not typically contain oil and grease like those associated to parking areas and can be infiltrated to the ground with minor pre-treatment, therefore, no new oil and gas traps have been proposed. Overland vegetated sheet flow is the best treatment method if possible and that is implemented in some areas around the building. Runoff from the existing (to be replaced) sidewalk east of the 'drop off' lane will continue to drain to the existing drainage system under the south parking area. Some western roof leaders off of the new building will also be piped to this system. This existing drainage and infiltration system was designed and installed with the Elementary School project and has some excess recharge capacity (the entire school system had some excess recharge/infiltration capacity). The majority of the new roof areas will drain to new subsurface infiltration trenches. They will collect in a treatment manhole to trap sediment and help remove some suspended solids, then fill up the infiltration trenches. An overflow from this system will daylight to a catch basin on the existing elementary school drainage system. The infiltration area has been sized to accommodate approximately 0.35" of runoff from the roof area prior to overflow, which will accommodate most storms throughout the year and provide suitable recharge as required by the Wellhead Protection Overlay District.

Permanent erosion control for the site will not change from the current site. All disturbed areas will either be planted as lawn or will be building and/or sidewalk. The play equipment to be relocated will have a final state much like the current state, woodchips, etc. at grade immediately around the structures. Likewise, the baseball field to be relocated will be primarily lawn with the exception of the infield sand/clay mix, to the same extents as it currently exists. Construction period erosion controls are shown and detailed on the site plans. All disturbed areas will be minimized and stabilized upon completion of grading and seeding. Areas that cannot be immediately seeded will be temporarily mulched to reduce erosion. The existing catchbasins around the work area will be protected from siltation by straw bales and silt sacks. The site is essentially flat which helps reduce erosion from stormwater runoff.

Section 5.3: Environmental Standards –5.3.C.4

Since this project is within the Wellhead Protection Overlay District, impervious coverage restrictions for that district and their standards apply. The limit on impervious coverage within this overlay district is 15% of the site. The Elementary School project proposed an impervious coverage of approximately 28% of the site and for that it employed several stormwater infiltration areas to help treat stormwater and offset this increase in impervious area. There are two separate subsurface infiltration areas below the south parking lot and two below the northeast parking area. There is also some surface storage of runoff in the western grass area, west of the bus loop, that retains water for infiltration. All of these systems combined had excess capacity as compared to what was required for recharge when permitting the project through the Wetlands Protection Act prior to construction of the school.

The WYC building and new sidewalks increase the impervious coverage to approximately 30%. We have proposed additional subsurface infiltration trenches for recharge of the building roof area. The infiltration areas are sized to accept approximately 0.35" of runoff over the impervious area of the building. This is consistent with Massachusetts DEP's stormwater management recharge requirement for impervious areas on hydrologic group B soils. This 0.35" goal provides recharge that approximates the vegetated condition of said B soils.

The Williamstown Youth Center requests approval of a Special Permit to allow an increase of approximately 2% to 30% impervious coverage of this site within the Wellhead Protection District.

Section 5.3: Environmental Standards –5.3.D&E

The proposed building and use is consistent with the neighboring elementary school. It will be heated by electric heat pump and will not produce any onsite emissions or odors. The use of the space/program contains indoor learning and play spaces for children as well as outdoor play activities. This is not a manufacturing facility.

Section 5.4: Design Requirements –5.4.A&B

The project does not propose any additional parking spaces or modification to any of the existing parking areas. The existing parking facilities and its screening, visibility, and drainage systems were all reviewed and approved with the Elementary School project.

The building is situated, offset from School Street by approximately 120 feet, so that much of the vegetation between the building and the street will remain intact. This results in nearly 100% of the front yard immediately adjacent to the proposed building as vegetated. The building is oriented perpendicular to School Street which is parallel

to the existing parking area and 'drop off' lane.

The site is essentially flat and will be minimally changed in grade as part of this project, typically within 0' to 3' of existing grade.

Site circulation will not change as a result of this project. The south parking lot and its current alignment, circulation, and use, are ideal for the function of the school and youth center. The circulation in this parking area is established, safe, and well known by many users of the area, many of which will be now using both the school and youth center.

Pedestrian access/sidewalks from School Street, the school, and neighboring Southworth and Church Streets will remain intact. The new WYC will immediately abut the existing sidewalk along the south parking lot providing safe access to the building. An additional walk from this sidewalk to the south side of the youth center is provided for emergency egress purposes.

The landscaping requirements for this project are related to the parking requirements. Parking for the Youth Center use, as determined by the Planning Board, was established at 'not more than 13 parking spaces'. Since the school site already has in excess of 13 spaces beyond what is required for the school use, and since the school and youth center uses co-exist yet typically are offset during the course of the day, no new parking spaces are proposed (see a more detailed parking count description in section 70-6.1.B). The original permit for the Elementary School requested relief by special permit of some screening requirements in order to enhance the safety of school children in and around the parking areas. This special permit was granted. The intent of the landscaping for this project is to leave as much intact as possible, and replace as many of the small trees that will be displaced with a similar size tree and species. We ask that the landscape requirements remain unchanged as previously permitted especially since there is no increase in parking on site.

Section 5.4: Design Requirements –5.4.D

The project will displace one site light pole along the existing 'drop off' lane sidewalk where the building is proposed. The new building will have minimal lighting, primarily at the entrances, porches and along egress routes. A lighting plan for the building and cut sheets are attached.

Section 5.4: Design Requirements –5.4.E,F,G,H & I

The building will have electric heat pumps for heating and cooling and a roof mounted energy recovery ventilation system. The mechanical systems will meet the required sound levels at the property line for noise zone B (55db(A) daytime, 50 db(A) nighttime). Heat pumps generally are fairly quiet. The condensing units for the cooling portion of

the heat pump system will be ground pad-mounted on the outside of the facility.

The Youth Center use (kids playing in the yard) will not produce any vibration at or beyond the property line.

The Youth Center building electrical loads are fairly typical for a building of this size. Efforts have been made to reduce loads as much as possible through daylighting and insulation and there are provisions to reduce future loads with future roof mounted photovoltaic electric generating panels. The building and its use should not produce any electric disturbances.

The location and design of this building will be consistent and complement the existing school and will not impair the historic value of any neighboring historical sites. The school site is not listed as a historic or archaeological site.

Solid waste will be managed with a recycling and garbage disposal area immediately adjacent to and outside the building. Removal of recycling and garbage will be contracted to a local waste hauler and will be performed at regular intervals.

Section 6.1: Parking Requirements –6.1.B & C

The Youth Center went to the Planning Board for a parking determination in July of 2009 with a preliminary site plan that showed a new Youth Center building on the Elementary School site. The Board determined that not more than 13 spaces be required for the use at this site (see attached Parking Determination). The Elementary School provided 160 parking spaces, 20 spaces more than the 140 required by the Planning Board at that time. The Youth Center intends to meet its need of 13 spaces with some of these extra 20 spaces currently on site. The complimentary use of the site and its users, between School and the Youth Center, at offset times of the day, was part of the rationale in determining the Youth Center parking demands and the decision to not provide any new spaces.

The existing parking area meets all of the development standards for surfacing, lighting, drainage, and circulation areas as previously permitted. This project will not change the parking lots ability to continue to meet those standards and there are no parking lot modifications proposed.

During construction it is anticipated that the 'drop off' lane of the existing parking lot will be fenced off to keep people and kids out of the work area. This will allow for continued use of the parking lot for school use. The project will have a temporary construction access off of School Street. The work / staging area will be fenced off to protect people from the construction activities.

CONCLUSION

The Williamstown Youth Center respectfully requests that the ZBA approve of the modifications to the combined special permit and development plan review to include the new Williamstown Youth Center building project (#2000-06) as described in the enclosed plans.