

Phil Boyle

From: jssimon5@comcast.net
Sent: Monday, May 22, 2017 3:08 PM
To: Phil Boyle; Peter Chase; Phyllis Metcalfe; Bob Bundy; Nicolo Caldera; Jennifer Freedman
Cc: Rebecca Vaughn; Bracken, Dave; Todd Cusimano; Adam Wolff
Subject: The proposed change in R1 zoning does not fit in the character of the present neighborhood

Dear All,

Hilde and I will be at the planning meeting on 5/23/17. I may have to leave early due to a 3 a.m. wakeup call for a previous commitment.

Hilde will remain. The following are the points I hope to make to all. I understand the planning commission has other issues to consider tomorrow night as well, and thus hope this email will be included in the record.

The bottom line is the proposed project does NOT fit in the master plan. The zoning is R1 and should remain so, for the 5164 Paradise Drive property. **This successful 501c3 private business is a victim of it's own success and has OUTGROWN ITS PRESENT SITE.**

A change in zoning will change the character of the neighborhood and destroy our privacy.

Sound and traffic studies were competently studied but only at specific times. A slice of reality but not the whole picture. It does not include

the effect on neighbors higher up than us and does not include the change in the sound dynamic when the fence between 5164 and

the MMS campus is removed and the natural spillover of playful children into the 5164 property inevitably occurs.

This zoning change is NOT consistent with the general plan, will adversely affect the character of the neighborhood and will open the

already congested Paradise Drive to yet more traffic as any "future" increase in enrollment to justify the new construction expenditure

will be more than this project can handle in an existing flood zone that is further compromised during high tides and storms.

Please note we love children, we raised 3 of our own and are blessed so far, with 2 grandchildren.

For the sake of everyone's safety kindly note there have been two (2) accidents on Paradise Drive in the last @ 6 months. An alleged DUI rollover crashing into the Marin Country Day School fence at the border with Marin Montessori School at 10:30 am on a week day and the tragic collision with 2 bicycle riders when an inexperienced 16 y.o. driver bringing her younger sister to Marin Montessori was blinded by the morning sun.

Sincerely,

Jim a Hilde Simon

Bruce Price

110 Mariner Green Drive • Corte Madera, CA 94925 • Phone: (415) 637-9202
E-Mail: bmprice@usfca.edu



RECEIVED
MAY 22 2017
TOWN OF CORTE MADERA

Date: May 15, 2017

Mr. Phil Boyle
Senior Planner
Corte Madera Planning Dept.
300 Tamalpais Drive
Corte Madera, CA 94925

Dear Mr. Boyle:

I write in strong support of the proposed expansion of the Marin Montessori School (“MMS”) grounds. I write as a parent of a student and as a law professor, but far more importantly as a resident of Corte Madera for whom quality of life as well as property values must be of preeminent importance. Significantly, all three of my capacities indicate that this is the right move, at the right time, and has been done in the right way. The rezoning of the property at 5164 Paradise is appropriate and consistent with the purposes and intent of the General Plan that supports school uses in residential neighborhoods.

I carefully read the entire Marin Montessori School – Proposed General Plan Amendment, Zoning Amendment, Design Review and Use Permit Amendment (“Report”). I was aware that MMS had purchased 5164 Paradise Drive and wants to expand the existing school grounds to include the new property and modify the current buildings for classroom use. I reviewed conceptual drawings and also toured the physical property. Before doing so, I had several areas of concern, all of which have been addressed by MMS and by the town in a way in which I can only describe as a model partnership for how to make changes to address the legitimate needs of the residents of our special town.

As an initial matter, I was very pleased to see that LAK Associates, a land use planning consulting firm specializing in environmental reviews, prepared the Report. Their area of expertise is in ensuring community design character, transportation and circulation issues, enhancing drainage and wetland mitigation, and the preservation of open space. Choosing an objective third party to provide the Report gave me confidence that a neutral, objective third party was addressing the issues that matter the most to the residents. That they are located in Corte Madera and do most of their work in Southern Marin gives me confidence that they would be even more sensitive to our unique needs.

I had initially assumed MMS would be expanding, not just their footprint, but also the number of students and staff and vehicles. I was extremely pleased to see that they are not adding any more students or staff as a result of the expanded facilities. That they are not expanding their enrollment AT ALL means that there will be no increased environmental, noise, or traffic impacts because of this project. In fact, I see they are making important changes that will decrease any existing quality of life issues:



- Minimizing the number of vehicles on Paradise Blvd. and increasing safety around the blind curve near the school is very important to me. I was pleased to see that in regard to parking and safety:
 - MMS entered into an agreement with the Corte Madera Town Center to park their fleet of vehicles in the mall parking lot;
 - MMS employees will no longer park on Paradise Drive;
 - The project will increase the number of parking spaces on campus at MMS; and
 - Access through the entry gate to 5164 Paradise Drive will be limited to emergency vehicles and two faculty members, which will help reduce the exiting hazards that result from the driveway opening onto a blind curve;

- Decreasing the noise generated by the students is important to me. I was pleased to see that in regard to noise, because of the expanded footprint and changes agreed to:
 - Play activities will occur away from the neighbors and at the center of campus, not on the new property;
 - The area immediately next to the neighboring residential parcel is planned as a quiet meditative area, with no noisy activity allowed;
 - All decking is planned to be moved so that when students are outside, their voices point toward the center of campus and away from the nearby homes;
 - MMS has agreed to enforce quieter uses closer to the residential parcel property line; and
 - Noise that is currently generated in afternoons during “After School Care” will no longer be an issue because the program will move to the new area.

I think it’s also worth noting as a quality of life issue that it is a huge boon to our community that the school day at MMS ends in the afternoon during the school week, and the school is closed weekends, holidays, and summers. My family hikes Ring Mountain on many weekends and holidays, and never hears any noise coming from the direction of MMS (or MCDS). Expanding the footprint of MMS, and without expanding enrollment, will only contribute to that important silence. I am grateful to the partnership between MMS and the town that we all have this benefit.

- I am also keenly focused on maintaining property values in Corte Madera. We are all blessed to live here, but the reality is that we make a huge investment in our area. MMS is an important part of the value of our community, and the expanded footprint will only increase that effect. I was pleased to note that:
 - The architects leading the project are the same ones who designed the primary, lower elementary, and administrative buildings. This, and review of the planned renovations, gives me confidence that the new buildings will blend in seamlessly with the existing architecture so that the character of this part of our community will just be updated
 - The plans are to preserve and add to the existing plantings, and only make minimal exterior modifications to the existing structures, ensuring that our distinct vegetation, trees, and native plants will not be effected; and
 - MMS will enhance the Bay Trail for walkers and include educational installations to inspire greater interest in and care for the Bay ecology.



The intent of the General Plan is to support schools in residential neighborhoods. This is a community value, a quality of life issue, and in the financial interests of the residents of Corte Madera. The Report, the conceptual drawings and my tour of the facilities convince me that the town and MMS have partnered to do everything they could to make sure that the MMS project will improve our community and enhance our property values. Expanding the footprint of MMS but not expanding enrollment at all, greatly reducing the cars on Paradise Blvd., making the entrance to the school safer, reducing noise on the campus in a variety of ways, updating the architecture of the buildings, and improving the Bay Trail, are all huge benefits to those of us who live here. The process has been handled very well, and the outcome will benefit us all. I am proud to live in a community where both the town and the school took steps to make sure this project would be a success.

Kindest Regards,

/s/ Bruce

Bruce M. Price
(Mariner Green)

Ms. Paula Gill
412 Summit Drive
Corte Madera, California 94925

Mr. Phil Boyle
Senior Planner
Corte Madera Planning Department
300 Tamalpais Drive
Corte Madera, California 94925

Dear Mr. Boyle,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed Marin Montessori School (MMS) Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration. My family and I moved to Corte Madera in October of 2011. We were drawn to the access to open space, the outstanding public and private schools, and the quiet nature of the town.

As we moved to Corte Madera, I left civil service with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as a Regulatory Project Manager to start a small environmental consulting business. At Johnson Marigot Consulting, LLC (JMC) we assist clients in attaining federal and state environmental clearance for a wide variety of projects. As a MMS parent, I have donated my time to assist the school in securing necessary approvals from the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) for the project.

The initial study, completed by the independent third party, is a thorough review of the project based on sound, recent evidence. The mitigation measures the school has agreed to implement are appropriate and address relevant areas of concern (e.g. noise). No findings rise to a level above "Less-Than-Significant with Mitigation Incorporated".

In working through the BCDC approval process, we have collaboratively defined a project consistent with BCDC's mission to *protect and enhance San Francisco Bay and to encourage the Bay's responsible and productive use for this and future generations*. The project, as reflected in the CEQA document, effectively avoids and minimizes all adverse effects to aquatic or sensitive resources (i.e. no work is planned to occur within the marsh) and incorporates public access elements, to the maximum extent feasible. The school has included construction of an entry totem, rest areas (i.e. benches and tables), vegetation improvements, interpretive signage, and an extension to the public access pathway. In addition, the project offers further public benefit, including removal of a noisy dock, new onsite parking, and improved vehicle circulation. Each of these improvements facilitates public access to the marsh and the SF Bay shoreline for the public while avoiding valuable aquatic resources.

With implementation of the recommended mitigation measures, the review demonstrates the project would be consistent with the City's General Plan and would not change the current

character of the site. We look forward to the implementation of the MMS proposal, as the project effectively balances benefits to both the public and the MMS community.

As members of both the town and MMS communities, we can attest to the value of access to a Montessori education. The opportunity to provide this unique approach to education enriches the lives of our children, who are fortunate to call Corte Madera home.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paula C. Gill". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "P" and "G".

Paula C. Gill

CC: Mr. Sam Shapiro, Head of School, Marin Montessori School

Phil Boyle

From: Sam Shapiro <sshapiro@marinmontessori.org>
Sent: Monday, May 22, 2017 12:07 PM
To: Phil Boyle; Sean Kennings; Judith Propp; Adam Wolff
Subject: RE: Clarification: Simon's have NOT endorsed MMS project

Thanks, Phil.

When I met with Jim and Hilde on Friday afternoon, to discuss a possible agreement about a view easement, he told me that he heard this rumor. I explained that I did mention to the planning commissioners with whom I met that we were in discussions with the Simons about a possible agreement, but I did not say to them that we had reached an agreement.

Best,
Sam

From: Phil Boyle [mailto:pboyle@tcmmail.org]
Sent: Monday, May 22, 2017 12:00 PM
To: Sam Shapiro <sshapiro@marinmontessori.org>; Sean Kennings <sean@lakassociates.com>; Judith Propp (<jpropp@publiclawgroup.com> <jpropp@publiclawgroup.com>); Adam Wolff <awolff@tcmmail.org>
Subject: FW: Clarification: Simon's have NOT endorsed MMS project

FYI

Phil Boyle
Senior Planner
Town of Corte Madera
300 Tamalpais Drive
Corte Madera, CA 94976-0159
(415)927-5067
pboyle@tcmmail.org

From: jssimon5@comcast.net [mailto:jssimon5@comcast.net]
Sent: Sunday, May 21, 2017 6:24 PM
To: Phil Boyle
Subject: Fwd: Clarification: Simon's have NOT endorsed MMS project

Dear Phil,
As a courtesy to you I am forwarding this to you as well. Forgive me for not having on this list to begin. There are too many moving parts to think of everything.
Sincerely,
Jim

From: jssimon5@comcast.net
To: pc@vanacker.com, plmetcalfe@comcast.net, bundyworld@comcast.net,

nicocaldera@gmail.com, jenniferkfreedman@gmail.com

Sent: Sunday, May 21, 2017 8:34:32 AM

Subject: Clarification: Simon's have NOT endorsed MMS project

Dear All,

It has come to my attention through a neighbor, that Marin Montessori School may have possibly told some Planning Commissioners that Hilde and I have endorsed the school's new project and the zone change for their project.

We kindly submit to you all that we have no desire to change anything. We are in R1 and want to keep it that way as do all

our neighbors. **Hilde and I have signed or endorsed nothing.** We are in R1 residential in Corte Madera, as zoned by the wisdom of the Town Council in their master plan.

Respectfully and Sincerely,

Jim and Hilde Simon

RECEIVED

MAY 22 2017

May 22, 2017

To Whom it May Concern:

TOWN OF CORTE MADERA

My husband Andrew Riesenfeld and I have been Corte Madera residents for 6 years. We feel grateful to have so many wonderful schools in our town, both public and private. We feel it is a privilege that this community is blossoming and growing more and more young families each year. What strikes me as wonderful is the theme of so many parents supporting their own schools, but also the respectful and cooperative relationship to other schools in the town of Corte Madera.

We fell in love with Marin Montessori for our children, Isabella (6) and Henry (3). This school has been a huge gift in our lives, for what it is teaching our children, not only are they learning in strides academically, but they are becoming global citizens in a school that is nourishing the "whole" child.

The introduction of this new campus will further enhance their education and allow space for a much sought after community center. The school as you know is not seeking higher enrollment, rather, just offering a platform for a more connected cohesive community. MMS has a long and over forty-year positive history as a Corte Madera resident.

- Every year, our families volunteer for coastal cleanups, projects to remove invasive species from Ring Mountain, and holiday caroling for the residents at Aegis retirement community--to name a few.
- We have a County of Marin Green Business certification—this required a two-year certification process. We use quiet battery-operated leaf blowers, solar power, and radiant floors.
- We are passionate about sustainable design and have designed the project to comply with Cal Green, Green Building Standards code
- We've had a long-term and very positive relationship with the next-door neighbor, the Keohanes, who previously owned the 5164 Paradise property
- MMS is a beacon, a well-recognized and sought-after school. Families move to and purchase homes in Corte Madera to be close to our school
- Our students are well known and appreciated in the community. In order to promote independence, our elementary students make frequent trips to local stores, law enforcement offices, and the library, whose staff often compliment our students for their politeness and maturity

- Given that we will preserve and add to the existing plantings, and only make minimal exterior modifications to the existing structures, this means that the lush and charming character of the property will remain the same. Most people looking from the street won't notice any difference. The two architects leading the project, Peter Pfau and Michael Heacock, ensure a seamless transition. Peter Pfau is the architect who designed our current primary and lower elementary classrooms and our administration building; Michael Heacock designed the main home on the new property. The new property will blend into our existing campus while maintaining its distinct vegetation, trees, native plants, and structural feel.
- We will enhance the Bay Trail for walkers and include educational installations to inspire greater interest in and care for the Bay ecology.

Here are a few points on the way our school conducted the work and analysis to be as respectful and cooperative with our beautiful town of Corte Madera

(1) All studies on the project were done by third-party objective professionals hired by the Town,

and they support the conclusion that there are not negative environmental, noise, or traffic impacts because of this project. This is logical since enrollment will not increase. We will repurpose two existing structures as classrooms and replace the outdated "Domes" classroom with a new building similar in size, along with enhancing landscaping and the BCDC public Bay trail.

(2) The study supports that MMS's parking and traffic impact is only getting better:

- We recently instituted a policy requiring employees to park either on campus or on Robin Drive. Even though it is legal to park on Paradise Drive, we have told employees they may not park there. This allows for more space for pedestrians and cyclists to travel safely along Paradise Drive
- We've also recently stopped parking school-owned vehicles on Paradise Drive and have an arrangement with The Village at Corte Madera to park our school vehicles in their parking lot

- Once completed, the project will increase the number of parking spaces on campus and will allow more cars to stack up in the Elementary traffic circle rather than off-site
- Our carline pick-up and drop-off procedure is highly supervised, safe, and efficient, and minimizes the impacts to Paradise Drive
- MMS coordinates with MCDS to use their large off-street parking lot for major events. Neighbors are alerted beforehand about the events, and MMS families are strongly encouraged to refrain from parking on Paradise Drive during the events
- Because access through the entry gate to 5164 Paradise Drive will be limited to emergency vehicles and two faculty members, this will help reduce the exiting hazards that result from the driveway opening onto a blind curve

(3) The studies show that our project design and the mitigation measures—operational restrictions to which the school has agreed—will effectively ensure that noise will not be impactful. This makes sense especially given the following:

- Montessori education emphasizes “grace and courtesy,” and the students tend to be very well behaved and quiet
- Montessori education emphasizes the development of concentration, so the environments tend to be quiet
- Play activities will occur away from the neighbors and at the center of campus, not on the new property
- The area immediately next to the neighboring residential parcel is planned as a quiet meditative area, with no noisy activity allowed
- All decking is planned to be moved so that when students are outside, their voices point toward the center of campus and away from the nearby homes
- MMS has agreed to enforce quieter uses closer to the residential parcel property line

- Noise that is currently generated in afternoons during “After School Care” will no longer be an issue: When the new project is complete, After School Care will move, to the west side of campus, in the reclaimed multi-purpose space
- Unlike a typical residence, when it becomes part of our campus, the 5164 Paradise property will be vacant and silent on weekends, holidays, and summers. It will also be unoccupied after 3:30 on most school days

As you can see- there are so many reasons to consider this incredible opportunity for our beloved Marin Montessori. The anchoring factor in all of this is the fact we are not looking to increase enrollment. We are creating a campus that will actually be more effiecent for the school and our wonderful community of Corte Madera.

With gratitude,

Lily Riesenfeld and Andrew, Corte Madera Residents

116 Baltimore Avenue

Corte Madera CA 94925

Phil Boyle

From: jssimon5@comcast.net
Sent: Sunday, May 21, 2017 6:24 PM
To: Phil Boyle
Subject: Fwd: Clarification: Simon's have NOT endorsed MMS project

Dear Phil,

As a courtesy to you I am forwarding this to you as well. Forgive me for not having on this list to begin. There are too many moving parts to think of everything.

Sincerely,
Jim

From: jssimon5@comcast.net
To: pc@vanacker.com, plmetcalfe@comcast.net, bundyworld@comcast.net,
nicolocaldera@gmail.com, jenniferkfreedman@gmail.com
Sent: Sunday, May 21, 2017 8:34:32 AM
Subject: Clarification: Simon's have NOT endorsed MMS project

Dear All,

It has come to my attention through a neighbor, that Marin Montessori School may have possibly told some Planning Commissioners that Hilde and I have endorsed the school's new project and the zone change for their project.

We kindly submit to you all that we have no desire to change anything. We are in R1 and want to keep it that way as do all

our neighbors. **Hilde and I have signed or endorsed nothing.** We are in R1 residential in Corte Madera, as zoned by the wisdom of the Town Council in their master plan.

Respectfully and Sincerely,
Jim and Hilde Simon

Phil Boyle

From: Perez, Elena@BCDC <elena.perez@bcdc.ca.gov>
Sent: Friday, May 19, 2017 3:52 PM
To: Phil Boyle
Subject: Fw: BCDC Comment Letter
Attachments: Draft Initial Study_Mitigated Negative Dec_Marin Montessori Expansion.pdf

Dear Phil Boyle,

Please find BCDC's DIS/MND Comment letter for the Marin Montessori School proposed project attached. A hard copy is also being sent to you.

Thank you.

Elena Perez

From: Braud, Alex@BCDC
Sent: Friday, May 19, 2017 2:35:24 PM
To: Perez, Elena@BCDC
Subject: FW: Response Letter

From: "Ogata, Gregory@BCDC" <gregory.ogata@bcdc.ca.gov>
Date: Friday, May 19, 2017 at 2:33 PM
To: Alex Braud <alex.braud@bcdc.ca.gov>
Subject: Response Letter

Gregory Ogata
Legal & Enforcement Support
San Francisco Bay Conservation
and Development Commission
455 Golden Gate Avenue, Suite 10600
San Francisco, CA 94102
(415) 352/3600 | gregory.ogata@bcdc.ca.gov

San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission

455 Golden Gate Avenue, Suite 10600, San Francisco, California 94102 tel 415 352 3600 fax 415 352 3606

May 19, 2017

Town of Corte Madera Planning Department
300 Tamalpais Drive
Corte Madera, California 94925

ATTENTION: Phil Boyle, Senior Planner

SUBJECT: Draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Marin Montessori School Expansion; SCH# 2017042038

Dear Phil Boyle:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) for the proposed project to expand the Marin Montessori School facilities at 5200, 5168, and 5164 Paradise Drive, in the Town of Corte Madera, Marin County, dated April 7, 2017, and received in our office on April 12, 2017. While the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission ("Commission" or "BCDC") itself has not reviewed the IS/MND, BCDC staff is providing through this letter comments on the IS/MND based on the Commission's law, the McAteer-Petris Act, and the policies of the San Francisco Bay Plan (Bay Plan).

Commission Authority and Jurisdiction. The introductory portion of the IS/MND correctly identifies BCDC as an agency with permitting authority over the proposed project, as a portion of the proposed project would be located within the Commission's jurisdiction. The Commission's jurisdiction includes both the Bay itself and a 100-foot "shoreline band," extending 100 feet inland from and parallel to the Bay shoreline, that shoreline being defined as all tidal areas of the Bay up to the line of mean high tide, or where there is tidal marsh, all areas five feet above mean sea level. Our understanding is that the proposed project is located entirely within BCDC's 100-foot shoreline band jurisdiction. For a project located entirely within its shoreline band jurisdiction, the Commission may deny a permit application for a proposed project only on the grounds that the project fails to provide maximum feasible public access to the Bay and shoreline consistent with the project.

Please note that in Section X(b) of its Evaluation of Environmental Impacts, the IS/MND does not include a discussion about the potential for conflicts with the relevant policies of the San Francisco Bay Plan (Bay Plan). The Bay Plan is an applicable land use plan for which BCDC, as an agency with jurisdiction over the proposed project, will grant or deny a permit on the basis of the project's consistency with its applicable policies.

Public Access. The IS/MND states on Page 17 that “[t]his amendment to the current minor permit #M87-7 is consistent with BCDC’s requirement for public access within the Bay’s 110-foot [sic] shoreline band.” Please understand that the Commission has yet to make a determination as to the consistency of this project with the applicable Bay Plan policies.

As discussed above, for a project located exclusively within its shoreline band jurisdiction, the Commission will review the project for consistency with the McAteer-Petris Act and the applicable Public Access policies of the Bay Plan. Section 66602 of the McAteer-Petris Act states, in part, “that existing public access to the shoreline and waters of the San Francisco Bay is inadequate and that maximum feasible public access, consistent with a proposed project, should be provided.” Bay Plan Public Access Policy No. 2 states, in part, that “maximum feasible access to and along the waterfront... should be provided in and through every new development in the Bay or on the shoreline...,” and Public Access Policy No. 9 states, in part, that “diverse and interesting public access experiences should be provided...” along the shoreline.¹

To date, BCDC staff has discussed the project in concept with the Project Proponents. As part of these discussions, staff identified a number of potential modifications to the proposed project that might enhance public access to the shoreline at this location and provide the public with diverse and more interesting experiences along the shoreline. For instance, BCDC staff discussed with the Project Proponents the desirability of providing public access to the proposed “Nature Play Area” located directly adjacent to the Bay shoreline during off-hours and/or weekends, when it would not pose an operational concern for the school. As part of its review of an application for a BCDC permit amendment to allow the development of the proposed project, the Commission will consider and make its ultimate determination on whether maximum feasible public access is provided consistent with the project.

Sea Level Rise. Bay Plan Public Access Policy No. 6 states, in part, that “whenever public access to the Bay is provided as a condition of development, on fill or on the shoreline, the access should be permanently guaranteed” and that “[a]ny public access provided as a condition of development should either be required to remain viable in the event of future sea level rise or flooding, or equivalent access consistent with the project should be provided nearby.” Bay Plan Public Access Policy No. 5 states, in part, that “public access should be sited, designed, managed and maintained to avoid significant adverse impacts from sea level rise and shoreline flooding.” In issuing or denying a permit for the proposed project, the Commission will thus evaluate the potential for shoreline flooding, including flooding in the event of future sea level rise, and its impacts to the public access area and improvements provided as part of the proposed project.

¹ Please note, that as used in the Bay Plan, “should” is mandatory.

Town of Corte Madera Planning Department
May 19, 2017
Page 3

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this IS/MIND. If you have any questions regarding this letter, please do not hesitate to contact me at (415) 352-3612 or elena.perez@bcd.ca.gov

Sincerely,



ELENA PEREZ
Coastal Program Analyst

EP/go

cc: State Clearinghouse

Phil Boyle

From: Tony Anziano <tanziano@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, May 19, 2017 10:28 PM
To: Phil Boyle
Subject: GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT, REZONING, DESIGN REVIEW AND CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT AMENDMENT FOR ADDITIONS AND MODIFICATIONS TO MARIN MONTESSORI SCHOOL
Attachments: CM letter.pdf

Mr. Boyle:

Attached please find letter regarding May 23 Planning Commission public hearing on above-referenced Marin Montessori School request. Original was sent via USPS on May 17.

Tony

Tony Anziano
10 Paloma Drive
Corte Madera, California 94925
(415) 279-8055
tanziano@yahoo.com

May 17, 2017

Phil Boyle
Senior Planner
Town of Corte Madera
Planning Department
300 Tamalpais Drive
Corte Madera, CA 94925-1418

Via U.S. Mail and e-mail to pboyle@tcmmail.org

Re: GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT, REZONING, DESIGN REVIEW AND CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT
AMENDMENT FOR ADDITIONS AND MODIFICATIONS TO MARIN MONTESSORI SCHOOL

Dear Mr. Boyle:

I am submitting this letter in support of the application by Marin Montessori School for a General Plan amendment, rezoning and amendment of their current Conditional Use Permit. Please include this letter as public comment at the upcoming May 23, 2017 Planning Commission hearing and any subsequent public hearings.

My wife and I have lived in east Corte Madera for over 26 years. We love this town and its strong sense of community. We have three children, all now grown. In the mid-1990s, we had the good fortune of encountering Marin Montessori School (MMS) when we began to look for a pre-school for our children. We were not familiar with Montessori education. We liked the school campus and the faculty, and were struck by the extraordinary peace and quiet of the classrooms. We enrolled our daughter, and this was the beginning of a decades-long relationship with MMS. Our other two children followed our daughter to MMS in successive years. As we grew to understand Montessori education, we wanted our children to stay enrolled at MMS through elementary school. All received not only an outstanding academic education; they also received a social education that will benefit them through their lives. The one thing that has always struck me about Montessori is its focus on grace and courtesy - Montessori values relationships, respect and community. Eleven years after we first found MMS all of our children had graduated from the elementary program. Even with the graduation of our children, we remain connected to MMS due to the strength of its community. That is why I am writing this letter, more than ten years after our last child graduated from MMS.

I have reviewed the Initial Study to make sure I understand the project. The Initial Study is very well done and conservative (finding at least the possibility of an impact when impacts are extraordinarily unlikely). The consultant support for key issues is experienced and respected. W-Trans knows Corte

Letter to Phil Boyle

May 17, 2017

Page 2

Madera traffic as well as anyone, and Charles Salter is the premier acoustical engineering firm in the Bay Area. The bottom line is that the school is not adding students, and proposed development is adding a net of slightly more than 400 square feet of building improvements to the property, which includes supplanting the Domes that are in need of replacement. The only change to traffic flow is an improvement – more que capacity in the elementary loop and additional on-site parking (beyond code requirements.) This is a well-conceived, minimally impactful project that will improve the site's appearance and allow MMS to continue to deliver the quality education that it has been providing for over 50 years. I support the project wholeheartedly as both a member of the MMS community and a resident of Corte Madera.

I know Jack and Kay Keohane, the prior owners of the residential property being proposed for rezoning and inclusion in the MMS campus. Kay was responsible for the MMS garden program, a key part of education at MMS. Kay was one of the treasures at MMS, and her incredible gardening knowledge and aesthetic is visible at both the MMS campus and her former home. She clearly cared for both, and I do not believe the Keohanes would have sold their property to the school if they did not believe that MMS would be an exceptional steward of their property. The inclusion of the Keohane property in the school campus is a fitting legacy to Kay's role in MMS history.

I understand that changes of any kind, even if minimal, are challenging for a neighborhood. I understand that the neighbors of MMS are concerned about having the school "move" slightly closer to their properties. However, I have been on campus during classes, during recesses, and during after school programs. I know what the school "sounds" like. I have travelled as a chaperone with MMS classes on school trips. On every trip, members of the public observing the school group expressed amazement about how well behaved the young MMS students were. All of this tells me that this incredibly respectful (and quiet) school community will do everything possible to make sure that neighbors are not impacted.

Schools are valuable members – foundations - of a community. Corte Madera is fortunate to be a home to outstanding schools, both public and private. MMS has been part of the Corte Madera community for over 50 years. I respectfully request that the Town support this proposed development.

Sincerely,



Tony Anziano

Phil Boyle

From: Sam Shapiro <sshapiro@marinmontessori.org>
Sent: Friday, May 19, 2017 5:02 PM
To: Nicolo Caldera
Cc: Phil Boyle; Adam Wolff; Doug Bush; Peter Chase
Subject: RE: MM School

Dear Commissioner Caldera,

Thanks for your message, and thank you again for visiting our school yesterday.

Yes, we can certainly be prepared to speak to this question on Tuesday (in brief, the triggers were the need to upgrade facilities, improve our educational program through a true elementary section of campus that puts children in closer proximity to nature, and a strong need for an indoor multipurpose space).

I look forward to sharing more with you and the other commissioners next week.

Thanks again,

Sam

From: Nicolo Caldera [mailto:nicolocaldera@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, May 19, 2017 2:08 PM
To: Sam Shapiro <sshapiro@marinmontessori.org>
Cc: Phil Boyle <pboyle@tcmmail.org>; Adam Wolff <awolff@tcmmail.org>; Doug Bush <dbush@tcmmail.org>; Peter Chase <pc@vanacker.com>
Subject: MM School

Hello Mr. Shapiro,

Thank you for taking the time to present the upcoming proposal yesterday. Given the late hours of our meeting, I forgot to ask you what specifics triggered the necessity to seek expansion of the MMS facility to the next lot.

Would you please be prepared to give us some details?

Thank you.

Regards,

Nicolo Caldera

Phil Boyle

From: jssimon5@comcast.net
Sent: Sunday, May 21, 2017 6:24 PM
To: Phil Boyle
Subject: Fwd: Clarification: Simon's have NOT endorsed MMS project

Dear Phil,

As a courtesy to you I am forwarding this to you as well. Forgive me for not having on this list to begin. There are too many moving parts to think of everything.

Sincerely,

Jim

From: jssimon5@comcast.net
To: pc@vanacker.com, plmetcalfe@comcast.net, bundyworld@comcast.net,
nicolocaldera@gmail.com, jenniferkfreedman@gmail.com
Sent: Sunday, May 21, 2017 8:34:32 AM
Subject: Clarification: Simon's have NOT endorsed MMS project

Dear All,

It has come to my attention through a neighbor, that Marin Montessori School may have possibly told some Planning Commissioners that Hilde and I have endorsed the school's new project and the zone change for their project.

We kindly submit to you all that we have no desire to change anything. We are in R1 and want to keep it that way as do all

our neighbors. **Hilde and I have signed or endorsed nothing.** We are in R1 residential in Corte Madera, as zoned by the wisdom of the Town Council in their master plan.

Respectfully and Sincerely,

Jim and Hilde Simon