



ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

**County Board Agenda Item
Meeting of July 11, 2009**

DATE: June 30, 2009

SUBJECT: U-3222-09-3 USE PERMIT, for a child care center at the Wilson School property; located at 1601 Wilson Boulevard (RPC# 16-032-001)

Applicant:

First Baptist Church of Clarendon – Child Development Center (CDC)
1601 Wilson Blvd.
Arlington, Virginia 22201

C. M. RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the use permit for a child care center, subject to the conditions of the staff report, with a County Board review in one (1) year (July 2010).

ISSUE: This is a use permit for a child care center. The applicant's use permit request can only be approved after the approval of a concurrent Zoning Ordinance amendment (ZOA-09-07) that would allow child care centers by Use Permit approval in "S-3A" Special Districts. Recommendations by the North Rosslyn and Radnor/Ft. Myer Heights Civic Associations are addressed in the report.

SUMMARY: The applicant, First Baptist Church of Clarendon – Child Development Center (CDC), requests a use permit for a child care center at 1601 Wilson Blvd. The child care center would have 185 children, aged from infancy to five (5) years old, with 61 employees, and would be open from 6:45 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The center would operate at the Wilson School property, from September 1, 2009 until August 31, 2011. The operation of the childcare program at the Wilson School site is intended to be temporary during the construction of The Views at Clarendon project, a mixed-use development located adjacent to the existing First Baptist Church of Clarendon – Child Development Center at 1210 North Highland Street. The use's proposed location would not create an adverse impact to the community and would permit the continuance of a valuable child care resource for County residents. Therefore, staff recommends approval of the child care center use, subject to the conditions of the staff report, and with a County Board review in one (1) year (July 2010).

County Manager: _____

County Attorney: _____

Staff: Jack Thompson, DCPHD, Planning Division

PLA-5310

BACKGROUND: The applicant, First Baptist Church of Clarendon – Child Development Center (CDC), has submitted an application to operate a temporary child care center at the existing Wilson School located at 1601 Wilson Blvd. The program would operate from September 1, 2009 until August 31, 2011.

The following provides additional information about the site and location:

Site: The site is located at 1601 Wilson Boulevard , along North Quinn Street between 18th Street North and Wilson Boulevard. The site is owned by Arlington Public Schools. Adjacent to the site is an Amoco Service Station at the corner of North Quinn Street and Wilson Boulevard. Rosslyn Highlands Park and Fire Station #10 are located to the east of the site, and Colonial Village and Queen’s Court multi-family residences are to the north and east. The proposed uses would be located in the existing Wilson School structure, as well as in one of the two existing “transportable” buildings to the rear of the principle structure.

Zoning: The site is zoned “S-3A” Special Districts.

Land Use: The site is designated on the General Land Use Plan (GLUP) as “Public” - Parks (*Local, regional, and federal*). Schools (*public*). Parkways, major unpaved, rights-of-way. Libraries and cultural facilities.

Neighborhood: The site is located in the North Rosslyn Civic Association and abuts the Radnor/Ft. Myer Heights Civic Association boundary.

DISCUSSION: The 2.6 acre Wilson School site currently has a permanent 3-story building consisting of approximately 19,200 square feet, and two (2) large relocatable structures consisting of 7,380 square feet each. The site does not have a permanent Arlington Public School (APS) program assigned to it, and for the last ten (10) years has been in continuous use by a variety of school programs requiring temporary quarters while their permanent facilities underwent construction or renovation. The subject property currently serves the Mongolian School and local community and educational groups, as well as The Children’s School, with the latter use moving to the newly constructed Reed School during the Fall of 2009. The Mongolian School presently uses the main building on Saturdays, between 7 am to 1 pm, with the option of one (1) class a week after 6 pm, Monday through Friday, and the community and educational classes are available during the evenings with some weekend use.

The applicant, First Baptist Church of Clarendon – Child Development Center (CDC), has filed a use permit application for a child care center for 185 children, aged from infancy to five (5) years old, with 61 employees. The proposed child care center will operate from September 1, 2009 until August 31, 2011 at the APS-owned property at 1601 Wilson Boulevard. The applicant will provide child care services from 6:45 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, and will be the sole user of the property during that timeframe. The CDC will use the main building as well as one of the two relocatables (the other will be removed by the APS), and have control of all of the site’s existing fifty-one (51) parking spaces. The site’s existing parking plan includes thirty-four spaces in the large parking lot; ten spaces in the small staff parking lot; and seven spaces along

the drop-off/pick-up driveway aisle. Two spots are currently designated for parking for handicapped persons. The Zoning Ordinance does not specify parking requirements for child care centers, but the 51 proposed parking spaces will provide adequate on-site parking for staff and for parents picking up and dropping off their children.

The North Rosslyn and Radnor/Ft. Myer Heights Civic Associations were notified of the application for the proposed use permit at the site and have provided a joint letter supporting the CDC's use of Wilson School for two years, subject to the following recommended conditions:

- “1. Wilson School will remain available evenings and weekends for use by other community and educational groups including the Mongolian School, and that*
- 2. One row of trailers will be removed at the time of your occupancy, and the affected play area restored, and that*
- 3. If possible, the final remaining row of trailers will be removed and the full playfield restored during your tenancy.*

Let it be noted that our long term goal remains a permanent educational use of Wilson School and permanent restoration of the Wilson playfield.”

As proposed, the Wilson School will remain open to community and educational groups, to include the Mongolian School, during the evenings and weekends, and the proposed child care center will only operate Monday through Friday, 6:45 a.m. to 6 p.m., with no evening or weekend use. The APS hopes to remove one of the two rows of relocatables (trailers), before the CDC moves in by late August, early September, 2009, and is currently in negotiations with the relocatable leasing company. The applicant is requesting temporary usage of the site and has stated that they do not have the funding or resources available to renovate the ‘playfield’ as requested in the Civic Association letter. Notwithstanding, any decision to renovate the field for neighborhood use would require action/approval by the Arlington County School Board, and no such action has taken place to date.

Lastly, the applicant's use permit request can only be approved after the approval of a concurrent Zoning Ordinance amendment (ZOA-09-07) that would allow child care centers and other uses licensed pursuant to Chapter 52 of the County Code, by Use Permit approval in “S-3A” Special Districts. The “S-3A” District permits school uses and uses of an educational nature, but does not allow child care as a primary use. The proposed amendment was discussed at the Zoning Committee of the Planning Commission (ZOCO) meeting on May 12, 2009, and no issues or objections were raised. On June 29, 2009, the Planning Commission voted 10-0 to recommend approval of the requested Zoning Ordinance amendment

CONCLUSION: The applicant, First Baptist Church of Clarendon – Child Development Center (CDC), has successfully operated a child care center at 1210 North Highland Street since 1969. The applicant has the support of the Arlington County Child and Family Services Division Child Care Office to temporarily relocate their existing child care use to 1601 Wilson Blvd. and has agreed to the conditions of the staff report. Therefore, staff recommends approval of the use

permit for a child care center, subject to the following conditions, and with a County Board review in one (1) year (July 2011):

1. The applicant agrees to meet the requirements of the Childcare Ordinance, Community Code Enforcement Office, Environmental Health Bureau and the Fire Marshal's Office, including securing the appropriate assembly permit prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy.
2. The applicant agrees that children shall be escorted by adults to and from the building at all times including during pickup and drop-off.
3. The applicant agrees that the hours of operation of the child care center would be Mondays through Friday, from 6:45 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. for a maximum of 185 children.
4. The applicant agrees that staff will escort and supervise any children who use the playground area at the adjacent park.
5. The applicant agrees to designate a neighborhood liaison to conduct ongoing meetings with the civic associations and nearby residents to address concerns that may be related to this child care center. The name and telephone number of the liaison shall be submitted by the applicant to the Zoning Administrator, as well as to the North Rosslyn and Radnor/Ft. Myer Heights Civic Associations.

PREVIOUS COUNTY BOARD ACTIONS:

- August 8, 1995 Approved use permit (U-2848-95-1) for operation of a Head Start Program for 106 children, ages 2 1/2 to 6 years, weekdays from 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. between September through June.
- August 3, 1996 Discontinuance of use permit U-2848-95-1 for 1601 Wilson Boulevard (Wilson School) for operation of a Head Start Program for 106 children, ages 2 1/2 to 6 years, on weekdays from 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. from September through June.
- January 17, 2002 Approved U-3026-01-1 Use Permit Request of Arlington Community Action Program (ACAP), Head Start Program, up to 76 children, Mon. – Fri. 7:30 am – 5:00 pm, with an administrative review in (October 2003).

INDEX TO ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A	Wilson School Site Plan
Attachment B	Wilson School Aerial
Attachment C	Floor Plans of Main Structure
Attachment D	Floor Plan of Relocatable (anticipated)
Attachment E	North Rosslyn and Radnor/Ft. Myer Heights Civic Association Letter