



ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

County Board Agenda Item Meeting of March 12, 2011

DATE: February 24, 2011

SUBJECT: U-3277-11-1 USE PERMIT of AHV Group Inc. for a child care center at 5232 Lee Highway (RPC# 09-001-021)

Applicant:

AHV Group Inc.
On behalf of Little Ambassador's Academy

By:

Walsh, Colucci, Lubeley, Emrich & Walsh, PC
2200 Clarendon Blvd, 13th Floor
Arlington, Virginia 22201

C. M. RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the use permit for the child care center at 5232 Lee Highway, subject to the conditions in the staff report, with an administrative review in six (6) months (September 2011) and a County Board review in one (1) year (February 2012).

ISSUES: This is a use permit request for a child care center in the former Whitman Walker Clinic building on Lee Highway. The John M. Langston Citizens Association, adjacent to the subject site, does not support the proposed child care center primarily due to traffic concerns. The Leeway Overlee Civic Association supports the use permit with the proposed conditions.

SUMMARY: Little Ambassador's Academy, the applicant, is proposing a new child care center for 78 children on Lee Highway, in the former Whitman Walker Clinic building. An existing parking lot with 21 parking spaces is available for use by the proposed center, and would be utilized for pick-up and drop-off and employee parking. A fenced-in outdoor play area is proposed adjacent to the site. While the Leeway Overlee Civic Association, where the proposed center would be located, supports the proposal, the adjacent John M. Langston Citizens Association has concerns regarding traffic, and proximity of the proposed Center to the existing radio tower and Lee Highway. Traffic impacts would be mitigated with a proposed condition that requires pick-up and drop-off to occur on-site in the existing parking lot, and for cars to avoid overflowing into the roadway. In addition, the play area would be fenced in, per the County's Child Care Office requirements, and thus no children would be allowed to play outside

County Manager:

BMD/GA

Staff: Melanie Jesick, DCPHD, Planning Division

PLA-5842

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of that area (i.e. adjacent to the roadway or tower). The applicant has met with the Child Care Office and the Child Care Office supports the proposal. A six (6) month administrative review would help monitor the proposal and address any potential issues once the Center begins operation. Therefore, staff recommends the use permit for the child care center at 5232 Lee Highway, subject to the conditions in the staff report, with an administrative review in six (6) months (September 2011) and a County Board review in one (1) year (February 2012).

BACKGROUND: The following provides additional information about the site:

Site: The proposed child care center would be located in the approximately 7,200 square-foot building, formerly the location of the Whitman Walker Clinic. The site contains an existing parking lot with 29 spaces. Eight (8) of those parking spaces are allocated to the bank, pursuant to a lease between the property owner and the bank.

North: Lee Highway and commercial uses (7-Eleven).

South: Single-family homes, a parking lot and the US Postal Service.

East: Bank of America exists on the same site to the east.

West: Single-family homes and a radio tower.

Zoning: The site is zoned “R-6” One Family Dwelling Districts.

General Land Use Plan Designation: The site is designated on the General Land Use Plan (GLUP) as “Low” Residential (1 – 10 units per acre).

Neighborhood: The site is located in the Leeway Overlee Civic Association. The civic association has been notified and responds that they support the proposed use permit as long as all County standards are met and that the use permit mitigates cars potentially overflowing onto Lee Highway and George Mason Drive (letter attached). The civic association agrees that the proposed conditions, outlined in further detail below, would address those concerns.

Given the close proximity of the site to the Yorktown Civic Association and the John M. Langston Citizens Association, those civic associations were also notified. Yorktown Civic Association has not provided comments to date. However, the John M. Langston Citizens Association responds that they do not support the proposed child care center (letter attached). The citizens association states that traffic impacts are a concern, as well as the proximity to the existing radio tower and Lee Highway.

DISCUSSION: The proposed center would operate Monday through Friday from 7 am – 6:30 pm. The entire two-level building, approximately 7,200 square feet, would be used for the center. No changes to the exterior of the building are proposed, with the exception of providing a fenced-in outdoor play area to the west of the building. It is the intention of the applicant to also incorporate the existing healing garden and gazebo into the play area for hands-on learning.

The existing parking lot contains a total of 29 parking spaces. Eight (8) of those are used by the bank next door. That leaves 21 parking spaces available for pick-up and drop-off and for employee parking. As there are 14 employees anticipated, that leaves at least seven (7) parking

spaces for pick-up and drop-off of children. The applicant would be required to ensure, per proposed Condition #3, that all pick-up and drop-off occur on-site, and that cars not overflow into adjacent streets (i.e. back up into the street and block traffic on Lee Highway). Condition #4 would require the applicant to designate a community liaison to address any issues, should they arise. The liaison's contact information would be required to be provided to the Zoning Administrator and all adjacent civic associations. The proposed conditions would address any potential issues. In addition, a six (6) month administrative review is proposed to closely monitor the use, including pick-up and drop-off and other traffic impacts, once operation has commenced.

CONCLUSION: Staff finds impacts from the proposed use would be minimal. The existing parking lot would provide ample room for employee parking and pick-up and drop-off. The Child Care Office has met with the applicant and supports the use. A six (6) month administrative review would allow monitoring of the proposed use after initial operation. Therefore, staff recommends the use permit for the child care center at 5232 Lee Highway, subject to the conditions in the staff report, with an administrative review in six (6) months (September 2011) and a County Board review in one (1) year (February 2012).

Proposed conditions:

1. The applicant agrees to meet the requirements of the Child Care Ordinance, Community Code Enforcement Office, Environmental Health Bureau and the Fire Marshal's Office, including securing an appropriate assembly permit prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy.
2. The applicant agrees to a maximum capacity of 78 children. However, the Department of Human Services Child Care Office will determine the final number of children (up to 78) that can be served in the program following any proposed or required renovations and improvements to the site. This number may be modified based on appropriate space ratios.
3. The applicant agrees that all pick-up and drop-off of children will occur on-site in the existing parking lot, and at no time shall cars overflow onto Lee Highway or George Mason Drive (i.e. back up into the streets).
4. The applicant agrees to designate a neighborhood liaison to communicate with nearby residents and neighbors to address concerns that may be related to the child care center. The name and the telephone number of the liaison shall be submitted by the applicant to the Zoning Administrator, as well as to the Leeway Overlee Civic Association, Yorktown Civic Association, and John M. Langston Citizens Association prior to issuance of any permits.

PREVIOUS COUNTY BOARD ACTIONS:

October 7, 1967	Approved use permit (U-1840-70-2) for erection of a radio tower.
January 8, 1972	Renewed use permit (U-1840-70-2) for a radio tower, subject to review in one (1) year (January 1973).
January 1, 1973	Renewed use permit (1840-70-2) with review in two (2) years (January 1975).
January 1, 1975	Renewed use permit (U-1840-70-2) with review in five (5) years (January 1980).
April 15, 1975	Approved site plan (Z-1808-65-4 or SP 43) for a branch bank, WAVA studios and Easter Seal Building.
January 1, 1977	Approved a site plan amendment (Z-1808-65-4 or SP #43) to reduce the approved WAVA/Easter Seal Office Building from 12,400 square feet G.F.A. to 7,724 square feet G.F.A. (reduction of 4,676 square feet) by adding to the existing structure and for the exclusive use of WAVA (Easter Seal Office eliminated) and to reduce parking from 36 spaces to 30 spaces.
December 13, 1980	Renewed use permit (U-1840-70-2) for a commercial radio tower, with a review in five (5) years.
May 18, 1985	Renewed use permit (U-1840-70-2) for a commercial radio tower, with no further County Board review.
February 28, 1987	Approved a use permit amendment (U-1840-70-2) for a new main antenna on the tower, which would increase the height from 361 feet to 428 feet, subject to the proposed conditions.
October 5, 1996	Approved site plan amendment and use permit (SP #43 and U-2075-76-4) for the provision of medical services in three

ground floor rooms of the building (Whitman Walker Clinic), with a County Board review in one (1) year (October 1997).

October 4, 1997

Renewed site plan amendment and use permit (SP #43 and U-2075-76-4) for the provision of medical services in three ground floor rooms of the building (Whitman Walker Clinic), with no further County Board review.

November 14, 2006

Deferred use permit amendment (U-1840-70-3) to replace an existing tower structure at 5232 Lee Hwy. to the January 2007 County Board meeting.

January 27, 2007

Deferred Use Permit Amendment (U-1840-70-3) to replace an existing tower structure at 5232 Lee Hwy. to the March 2007 County Board meeting.

March 17, 2007

Deferred Use Permit Amendment (U-1840-70-3) to replace an existing tower structure at 5232 Lee Hwy. to the April 2007 County Board meeting.

April 21, 2007

Accepted withdrawal of the use permit amendment (U-1840-70-3) to replace an existing tower structure at 5232 Lee Hwy.

Melanie Jesick

From: Karla Brown [kapbrown@verizon.net]
Sent: Wednesday, February 16, 2011 10:37 PM
To: Melanie Jesick
Cc: 'Robert Swennes'; 'Pierre Y. Boyer'; 'Ladd Connell'; 'Jennifer Michener'
Subject: RE: proposed day care at former Whitman Walker Clinic site

From: Karla Brown [mailto:kapbrown@verizon.net]
Sent: Sunday, February 13, 2011 10:27 AM
To: Melanie Jesick
Subject: RE: proposed day care at former Whitman Walker Clinic site

Hello Melanie,

I have reviewed the documents you sent to me and discussed with the rest of the executive committee of the Leeway Overlee Civic Association. We support the proposed use permit as long as all county standards are met (i.e. ratio of caretaker to child, etc).

My only question would be regarding pick-up and drop-off times. With this many children potentially using the facility, what is the plan to keep cars from overflowing onto Lee Hwy or N. George Mason during those times? I'm sure you have seen, there are a number of other preschools in the area with the issue and the overflow of cars onto main arteries that impede traffic during commuting times. As long as this is mitigated, the Leeway Overlee Civic Association supports.

Thanks for including us.

Karla Brown
President, Leeway Overlee Civic Association



*The John M. Langston Civic Association
2106 North Emerson Street
Arlington, VA 22207
(703) 524-3948*

Meets at 7:00 p.m. on the 4th Wednesday at the Langston-Brown Community Center.

February 22, 2011

Ms. Melanie Jesick
Arlington County Dept. of Community Planning,
Housing and Development – Planning Division
2100 Clarendon Blvd – Suite 700
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Melanie:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the use permit for a proposed Child Care Center at the former Whitman Walker Clinic at 5232 North Lee Highway. The John M. Langston Civic Association (Executive Committee) has reviewed the application and we can not support this request for the following reasons:

The traffic congestion at Lee Highway and George Mason Drive, presently, is a nightmare, especially during rush hour. Adding a facility that would house 78 children and over 25 staff adds an extra burden to the existing problem.

The existing parking lot, which accommodates only the bank, presents hazards and dangers causing traffic backup onto Lee Highway. The addition of staff parking, the pick-up and drop-off of 78 children in and out of this oddly shaped, limited area presents the possibility of having traffic backed up for blocks. Traffic exiting the parking lot must exit to George Mason Drive through a bank drive-thru lane or turn around and exit onto Lee Highway. The George Mason Drive exit would then cause an additional flow of traffic through the neighborhood and the possibility of U-turning at George Mason Drive and North 22nd Street, another intersection already of concern for the neighborhood. Another concern, which should be taken into consideration, is the idea of housing children so close to a major highway and radio tower. Traffic and falling debris from the tower with children playing in the adjacent area could present safety hazards.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on this issue.

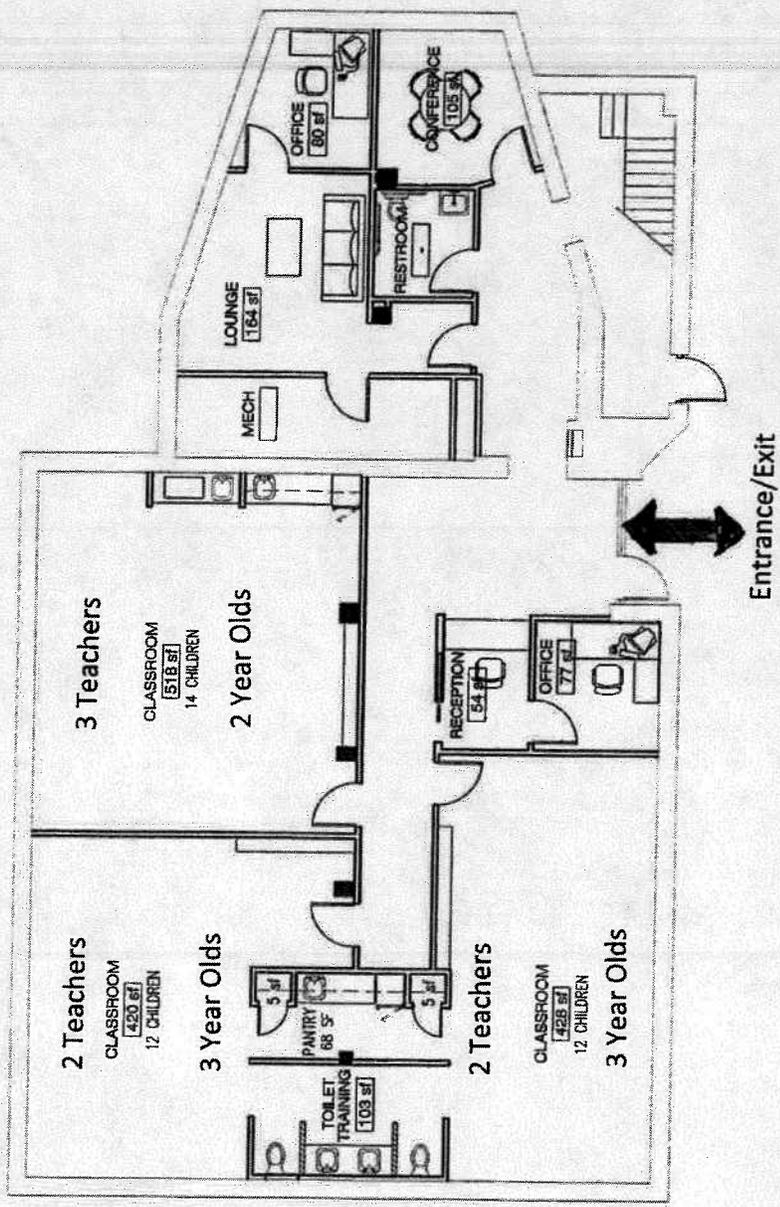
Sincerely yours,

Willie Jackson-Baker

Willie Jackson-Baker, President

Serving the Halls Hill/High View Park Community

PARTITION PLAN
TEST FIT 4



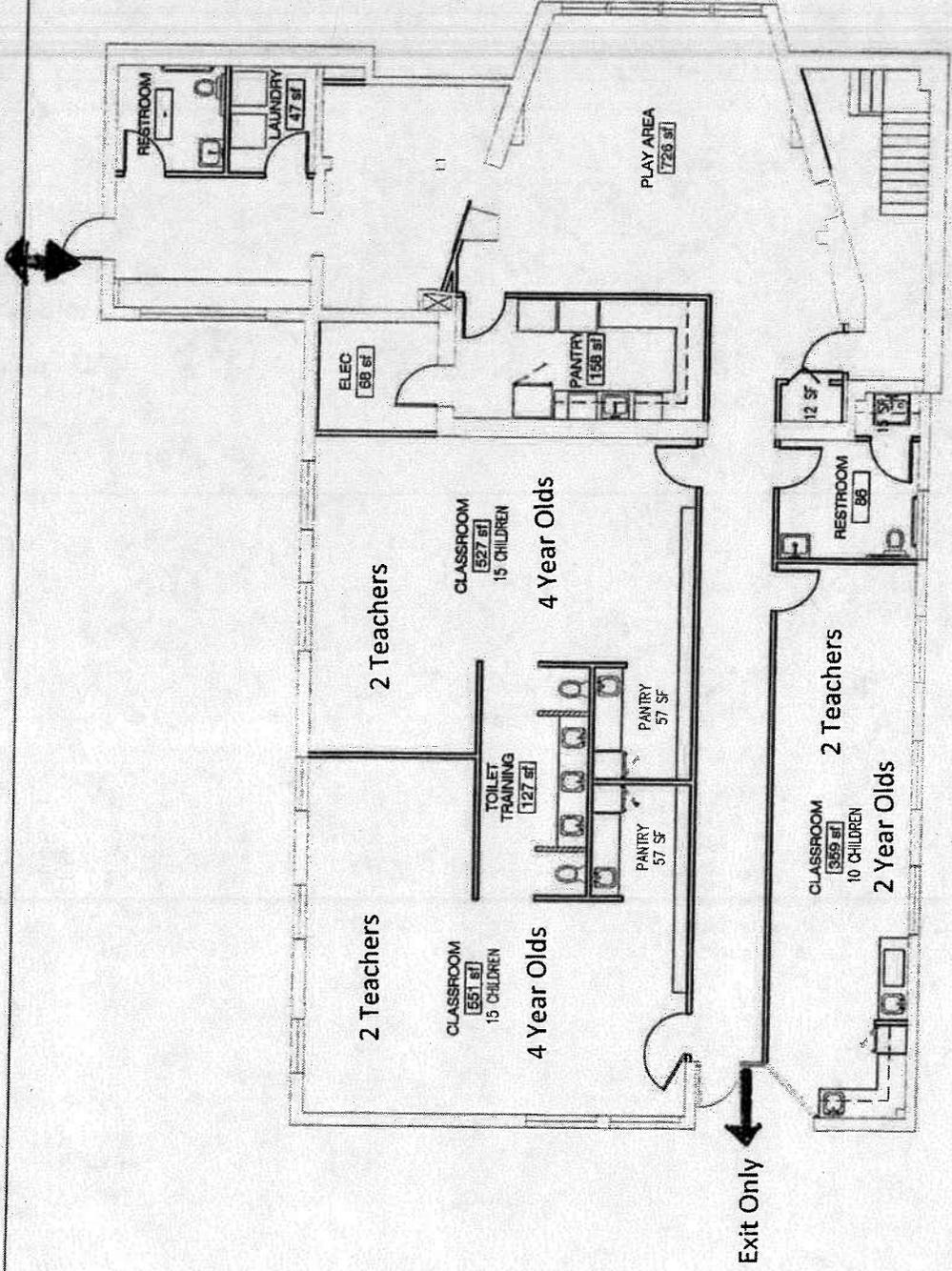
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"

DATE: 11-03-2010
 PROJECT NUMBER: 10108
 DRAWN BY: LMB

LITTLE AMBASSADORS ACADEMY
 5204 LEE HIGHWAY
 ARLINGTON VA
 LOWER LEVEL

F
FORMARCHITECTS
 1000 15TH ST NW
 WASHINGTON, DC 20004
 TEL: 202.331.2000
 WWW.FORMARCHITECTS.COM

Entrance/Exit to Outdoor Play Area



PARTITION PLAN
TEST FIT 4

SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"

DATE: 11-28-2010
 PROJECT NUMBER: 10118
 DRAWN BY: LAR

LITTLE AMBASSADORS ACADEMY
 5026 LEE HIGHWAY
 ARLINGTON VA
 UPPER LEVEL

F
FORMARCHITECTS
 1100 N. GUYMON ST. SUITE 100
 ARLINGTON, VA 22201
 TEL: 703.233.2200
 WWW.FORMARCHITECTS.COM

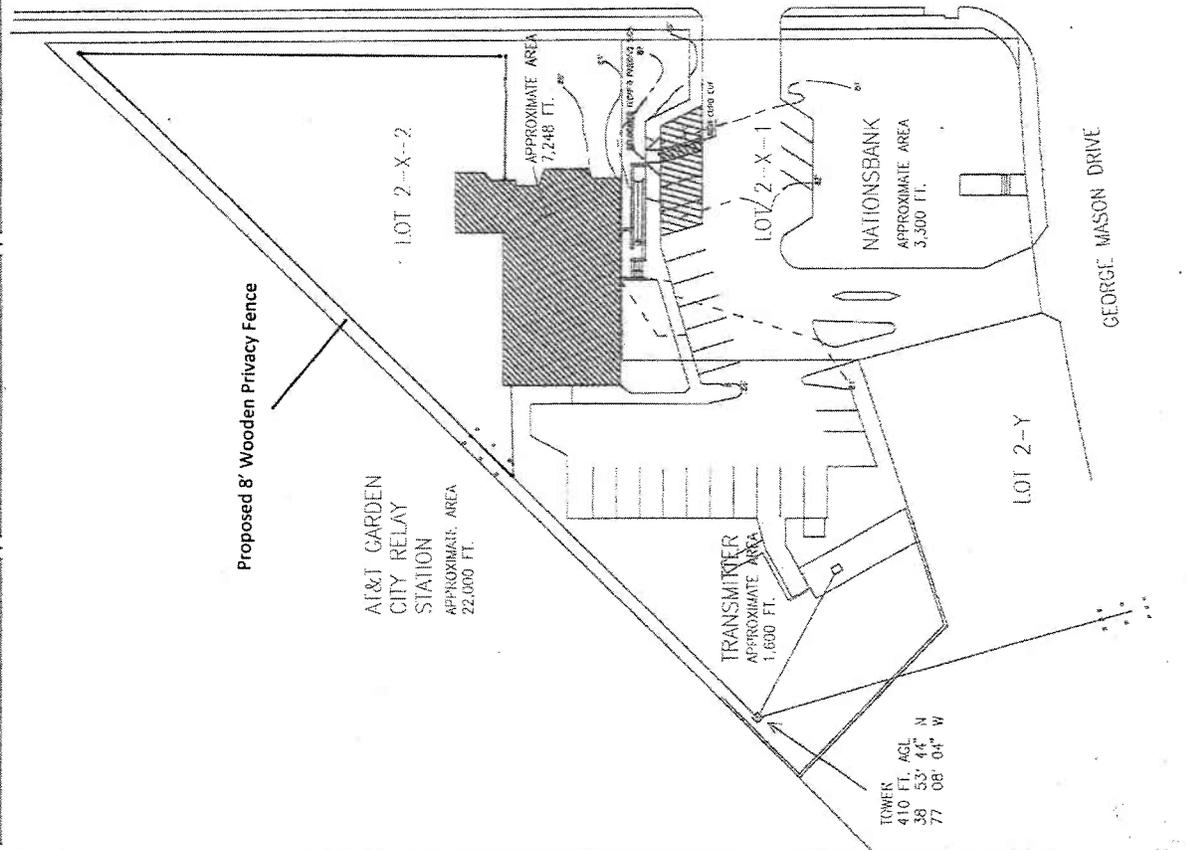
**WHITMAN WALKER
CLINIC OF
NORTHERN VIRGINIA**

**Gensler and Associates
Architects**

GENERAL NOTES
1. REFER TO ARCHITECTURAL SHEETS SHOWN
ON THESE PLANS FOR ALL NOTES AND
SPECIFICATIONS. SEE ALSO THE GENERAL
NOTES AND SPECIFICATIONS FOR THE
PROJECT LOCATED AT THE SITE.



LEE HIGHWAY



DATE: 11/11/01
SCALE: AS SHOWN
DRAWN BY: J. WALKER
CHECKED BY: J. WALKER
PROJECT NO.: 01-000000-01

PROJECT NUMBER: 01
DATE: 11/11/01

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U-3277-11-1

5232 Lee Highway

RPC: 09-001-021



 Case Location(s)
 Scale: 1:1,200

Note: These maps are for property location assistance only. They may not represent the latest survey and other information.