



ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

**County Board Agenda Item
Meeting of February 23, 2008**

DATE: February 6, 2008

SUBJECT: U-3192-08-2 USE PERMIT for a private preschool; premises known as 4701 Arlington Boulevard (RPC #20-025-001)

Applicant:

Arlington Forest United Methodist Church

By:

Herbert Quinn
Arlington Forest United Methodist Church
4701 Arlington Boulevard
Arlington, Virginia 22203

C.M. RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the use permit request for the operation of a private preschool for up to 65 children, three (3) to (6) years of age, subject to the conditions of the staff report, with a County Board review in one (1) year (February 2009).

ISSUES: This is a new use permit request for a preschool at the existing Arlington Forest United Methodist Church and no issues have been identified.

SUMMARY: This is a use permit request for a private preschool for up to 65 children at the Arlington Forest United Methodist Church at 4701 Arlington Boulevard. The preschool will operate from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. At full enrollment, there will be approximately eight (8) staff persons associated with the preschool. The existing parking lot has 53 parking spaces, which is more than sufficient to support the eight (8) parking spaces required (one space per staff person). The use will not conflict with other uses in the area and adverse impacts are not anticipated. Therefore, it is recommended that the use permit be approved subject to the conditions of the staff report with a review by the County Board in one (1) year (February 2009).

BACKGROUND: The Arlington Forest United Methodist Church (AFUMC) has occupied the site at 4701 Arlington Boulevard since 1940. The facility was designed for a congregation

County Manager: _____

Staff: Colleen J. Connor, DCPHD, Planning Division

PLA-4883

exceeding 500 participants. Currently, the Church has approximately 200 people in attendance at any given event.

The preschool will occupy the existing children's Sunday school area (see attached illustration). This proposed school area of approximately 3,000 square feet is located on the second floor of the northeast wing of the building. The Church and the operator will be doing renovation work to enlarge the rooms to meet the Department of Human Services (DHS) requirements. The following provides additional information on the site:

Site: The site is 46,971 square feet and is located at 4701 Arlington Boulevard. The site is developed with a two (2) story building plus basement originally built as a church with a fellowship and Sunday-school hall. The site is located on the northeast corner of Arlington Boulevard at its intersection with Henderson Road. The property is bordered on the north and east by play areas and parking lot areas owned by the adjacent property owner, the Arlington Assembly of God Church. To the west of the site are single family detached homes. The site fronts on the Arlington Boulevard off-ramp/frontage road, which has access onto Henderson Road. The site is bordered on the south across Arlington Boulevard by single family detached homes and town homes.

Zoning: The site is zoned "R-6" One-Family Dwelling Districts. Preschool uses are permitted as a special exception pursuant to *Section 36. Administration and Procedures, Subsection G.4* of the Arlington County Zoning Ordinance.

Land Use: The site is designated on the General Land Use Plans as "Low Residential" (1-10 units/acre).

Neighborhood: The use is located in the Buckingham Citizens Association area and is adjacent to the Arlington Forest Civic Association. Both organizations have been contacted, and to date, neither staff nor the applicant has received written input.

DISCUSSION: The use permit application for a preschool was submitted by AFUMC. The Church is in the process of negotiating an agreement with the Chesterbrook Montessori organization to operate the preschool. This site would be the second program in Arlington for Chesterbrook Montessori; the organization also operates a Montessori school at 3455 North Glebe Road.

The applicant has requested the use permit for up to 65 children, who range from three (3) to six (6) years of age. Based on their initial visit to the site, the Department of Human Services (DHS) staff determined that the spaces identified could accommodate up to 69 children. Renovations proposed to the Church facility would include interior renovations and would meet the requirements of the Child Care Ordinance, Community Code Enforcement Office, the Environmental Health Bureau, and the Fire Marshal's Office. The newly renovated space would consist of a total of three (3) to four (4) classrooms. The school may use some additional space that DHS did not include in its original calculations. Because of these uncertainties, it is important that the final maximum capacities for the rooms and for the outdoor play space be

determined by DHS per Conditions # 3 and Condition #4, pending the final measurements that will be determined once the build-out is complete.

The pre-school at AFUMC will operate between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, September through June. The school year runs from September through May, followed by a three (3) week summer school in June. As with most Montessori programs, the three (3) and four (4) year olds will attend until approximately 12 p.m. and the five (5) and six (6) year olds usually stay until approximately 3 p.m.

The entrance to the AFMUC parking lot is located off of Henderson Road. The preschool entrance from the parking lot is located on the north side of the Church, adjacent to the elevator (see attached illustration). Parents will transport their children to the site and will utilize a designated pick-up and drop-off area near the elevator located at the edge of the parking lot. This area will allow for the safe drop-off and pick-up of children internally on the site away from Henderson Road. Preschool staff will escort students between the drop-off area and the building, per Condition #5.

At full enrollment, there will be approximately eight (8) staff persons associated with the preschool, based on State and DHS standards. The existing parking lot has 53 parking spaces, sufficient to provide parking to support the eight (8) parking spaces required. The preschool parking requirement is based on the Zoning Ordinance requirement of one space per staff or employee. The typical use of the parking lot during the week by other uses on site includes two staff people for the Church.

AFUMC proposes to utilize the adjacent property owner's large fenced play area as the play area for the preschool. This play area is adjacent to the AFUMC's parking lot (see attached aerial illustration). The applicant is currently negotiating a lease with the adjacent property owner, the Arlington Assembly of God Church, for the use of their play area. The staff will accompany students to and from the building to the play area at all times, per Condition #6.

CONCLUSION: The use permit request to operate a preschool is compatible with other uses in the area and conflicts are not anticipated. The proposed use is a preschool at an existing institutional building which is surrounded by open areas and another institutional use. The classroom will be located away from the single-family homes across Henderson Road. The site has easy access from Arlington Boulevard and the frontage road onto Henderson Road. The site provides adequate space and services for the proposed number of children. The applicant would be expected to continue to work closely with Child Care staff to ensure that all State and local childcare codes are met. Therefore, it is recommended that the use permit be approved, subject to the conditions of the staff report with a County Board review in one (1) year (February 2009).

1. The applicant (as used in these conditions, the term "applicant" shall mean the owner, the applicant and all successors and assigns) agrees to comply with the conditions set forth below.
2. The applicant agrees to meet the requirements of the Child Care Ordinance, the Community Code Enforcement Office, the Environmental Health Bureau, and the

Fire Marshal's Office, including acquiring the required assembly permit prior to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy.

3. Child Care staff shall make the final determination on the appropriate number of children to be included in the programs, not to exceed 65 total, and the final determination ensuring the public/teacher ratios for the group.
4. The applicant shall work with Child Care staff to provide appropriate sized groups of children who could occupy the on-site outdoor play space at any given time. The applicant agrees to work closely with the Child Care staff in the development of any changes to the outdoor play space.
5. The applicant agrees that children receiving care shall be escorted from the drop off to and from the building by staff at all times.
6. The applicant agrees that children receiving care shall be escorted from the play area to and from the building by staff at all times.
7. The applicant agrees that the hours of operation are Monday through Friday between 8:30 a.m. and 4 p.m. The school year runs from September through May, followed by a three week summer school in June.

PREVIOUS COUNTY BOARD ACTIONS: There have been no previous County Board actions on this site.