



**Environmental
Planning
Commission**

*Agenda Number: 13
Project Number: 1007367
Case #'s: 08EPC 40079
September 18, 2008*

Supplemental Staff Report

Agent	Tierra West LLC
Applicant	Riverside Church of Christ
Request	Site Development Plan for Building Permit
Legal Description	Tract A-1-B, Lands of Joel P. Taylor within Sec. 25 T11N R2E
Location	La Orilla Rd. NW between Coors Blvd. NW and Corrales Riverside Drain
Size	Approximately 4.5 acres
Existing Zoning	SU-1 for Church and Related Uses
Proposed Zoning	No change

Staff Recommendation

APPROVAL of 08EPC 40079, based on the findings on page 5, and subject to the conditions of approval on page 7.

Staff Planner
Carol Toffaleti, Planner

Summary of Analysis

The proposal consists of phased additions to an existing church, off-street parking, a retention pond and landscaping. It was heard at the August 21, 2008 EPC hearing and deferred at the applicant's request, primarily to address concerns about encroachment of the 100' buffer for the Bosque along the Corrales Riverside Drain, which were raised by the City's Parks and Recreation Department and the affected neighborhood associations.

The site is in the Developing Urban area of the Comprehensive Plan and within the boundaries of the West Side Strategic Plan and the Coors Corridor Plan.

The revised site development plan furthers a preponderance of applicable goals and policies and complies with design regulations in the Coors Corridor Plan.

There is no known opposition to the proposal.

This report should be read in conjunction with the report from the August 21, 2008 EPC hearing (see att.)

Location Map (3" x 3")

City Departments and other interested agencies reviewed this application from 07/03/2008 to 07/23/2008. Agency comments were used in the preparation of this report and begin on page 26 of the August report. Comments on the revised site development plan begin on page 11 of the September report.

UPDATE

At the August 21, 2008 hearing, the applicant presented a site development plan that included a site drive and retention pond within the 100' buffer zone adjacent to the Corrales Riverside Drain. The retention pond was squeezed into a narrow strip of land between a 60' sewer easement and a site drive, and had a vertical side that required the addition of a safety barrier within the buffer zone. The City's Parks and Recreation Department commented the day before the hearing that the site plan was unacceptable as it deviated from the intent of the Coors Corridor Plan policy to protect the Bosque. The affected Neighborhood Associations, Taylor Ranch and Alban Hills, also called for eliminating encroachment of the buffer, in written comments and in testimony at the hearing. In addition, the EPC discussed concerns about light pollution and the appearance of the existing church relative to the additions. The applicant requested a 30-day deferral to address these concerns and conditions in the staff report.

ANALYSIS OF REVISED SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR BUILDING PERMIT

The applicant submitted a revised site development plan dated 8/25/2008 and a cover letter explaining the changes. A revised landscape plan dated 9/8/2008 was submitted later and included in the packet. Only changes to the August site development plan are analyzed below.

Site Plan Layout / Configuration

The layout has changed significantly in the eastern part of the site. The site drive within the 100' buffer zone was eliminated, except for a link to the existing curb cut and asphalt access near the end of La Orilla. The applicant's letter explains that they wish to retain the east entrance to allow for efficient vehicular ingress and egress, which staff finds reasonable. The two previous retention ponds were replaced with a single retention pond that has sloping edges. It is located in the buffer zone between the 60' sewer easement and the parking area. The changes fulfill the intent of the buffer zone established in the Coors Corridor Plan and stay clear of the sewer easement.

As a result of the redesign, the area of off-street parking was reduced. The applicant also moved the dumpster from the southern part of the site to the north drive aisle.

Conditions are recommended to correct minor errors in the site development plan.

Vehicular Access, Circulation and Parking

Although the development can be accessed from two vehicular entrances on La Orilla Rd, circulation through the site is now concentrated on the drive along the front of the church buildings, since the site drive in the buffer zone has been eliminated. However the first two drive aisles south of La Orilla are still connected at both ends.

Parking provision has decreased from 115 to 107 spaces in Phase I and from 120 to 113 spaces in Phase II. This represents approximately 9% and 4% less than the 118 spaces normally required at build-out, which Staff considers acceptable. Transportation Development is requesting a change near the east site drive, which would eliminate two additional spaces. Note that the EPC has discretion over the amount of parking provided in an SU-1 zone.

The proportion of small car spaces is larger (19 rather than 12), but still within the one-third limit allowed in the Zoning Code (see definitions, 14-16-1-5). All of these spaces should be called out on the site development plan, even if they cannot be striped on the site because of the pervious paving material.

The materials for the parking areas have not changed, but in Phase II, the applicant proposes to replace the asphalt on the drive in front of the residences with aggregate base course. The color of this material is similar to the natural soil and will respect the intent of the 100' buffer zone.

The double lines, where the asphalt and pervious material meet on the drive aisles, look like curbing and should be removed.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Access and Circulation, Transit Access

There are no changes to pedestrian and bicycle access and circulation in the revised plan. It still appears that the walkway in front of the existing church will remain flush with the level of the site drive. It is therefore unclear how it will transition to the new concrete walkway and curbing in front of the church addition in Phase I and in front of the classroom building in Phase II.

The landscaped bed in front of the existing church and those between the second and third rows of parking do not have curbing around their entire perimeter, which is also confusing relative to the walkways, if the walkways are meant to be elevated and edged with curbing. The beds and walkways could be at grade and still be surrounded with curbing, if there are curb cuts to allow runoff to infiltrate the beds. This needs to be clarified on the site development plan. Essentially, the design must prevent vehicular/pedestrian conflicts and provide safe and ADA-accessible movement across the site. Transportation Development's condition on this issues is still relevant.

Lighting and Security

The height of the lightpoles has been reduced from 20' to 16' at the EPC's direction and a note has been added to the site development plan to shut off lighting when the church facility is not in use.

No building-mounted lights are indicated. If any are intended, they must be shown on the elevations and the fixtures should be shielded to prevent off-site glare.

Landscaping

The landscape plan was revised to remove trees from the sewer easement within the buffer zone, as required by the Water Utility Authority, and to replace the plant palette with mostly native species recommended by the Open Space Division.

The buffer zone is now excluded from the calculations and planted with native cold and warm weather grasses. The existing vegetation is still retained along the Corrales Riverside Drain. Staff recommends the addition of plants along the site drive at the north and south ends of the retention pond to complete the transition between the developed area and the buffer.

Two thirds of the street trees should be shade trees, such as ash or cottonwood, per the Street Tree Ordinance. The chokecherry and New Mexico olive are considered accent trees.

Staff also recommends the following corrections:

Calculations:

- Landscape area in the ROW is 2,200 sf, which should be subtracted from total lot area, then included in the landscape area provided;
- Delete line beginning “1/3 may be sidewalk...”;
- 20% of parking area should refer to off-street parking policy 5.B in the Coors Corridor Plan (1984, as amended).

Plant legend

- Artiplex (four wing saltbush) has a mature spread of 6’ x 8’. Adjustments to the number of plants and coverage shall be made accordingly.
- Shade trees require 150 gallons per week during establishment, per the City Forester’s recommendation.

Grading & Drainage Plan

The elevations of the existing contour lines are now legible, but the applicant proposes to wait until the DRB submittal to show graded contours. The significant change is to the on-site retention of storm water runoff. It will be accommodated in a single narrow pond within the 100’ buffer zone, but outside the sewer easement, that is 3’ deep and has a 3:1 slope around its entire perimeter. The new design eliminates the problems associated with the previous submittal. The “future path” indicated in the buffer zone is an error and should be removed.

Architecture

The applicant has responded to concerns from the neighborhood associations and the EPC by proposing to repaint the existing church to match the color scheme of the additions (see color renderings). Staff finds this is a significant improvement to the appearance and cohesiveness of the development. The full-size elevations sheet A301 needs the addition of a Keyed Note 17 and a corresponding label to indicate that the vertical accent panels will be painted rust red to match the trellises on the additions. Elevations sheet A302 needs similar additions, but numbered 19. The keyed notes for repainting the wall panels should clarify that the horizontal line is the dividing line between the two colors.

The applicant has confirmed that the two additions are of different heights, for unspecified structural reasons. The church addition is 25’1” and the classroom addition is 26’1”.

The color of the roof is still white, which concerns staff, as the white roof of the existing building produces glare and detracts from the view of the bosque, as evident on a site visit (see photos in the August staff report, Figures 6 and 7). Staff recommends a more muted color, which should also be picked up in the color of the steeple.

CONCERNS OF REVIEWING AGENCIES

The revised site development plan was distributed to Transportation Development and the Open Space Division. Revised comments were received from Transportation Development and begin on p. 11.

NEIGHBORHOOD/PUBLIC CONCERNS

The applicant sent the revised submittal to the affected neighborhood associations. No comments have been received to date.

CONCLUSIONS

Revisions to the site development plan for building permit address the main criticisms raised at the August hearing by removing vehicular circulation from the 100' buffer zone for the Bosque, reducing the height of lightpoles, using more native plants and repainting the existing church to match the color scheme of the additions.

The proposal furthers a preponderance of applicable goals and policies in the three plans governing the site and complies with regulations of the Coors Corridor Plan.

Staff recommends approval with conditions, in order to make circulation safer, strengthen the landscape plan's compliance with City regulations, and make minor corrections to the submittal.

FINDINGS - 08EPC 40079, September 18, 2008, Site Development Plan for Building Permit

1. The request is a site development plan for Tract A-1-B, Lands of Joel P. Taylor, a site of approximately 4.5 acres, located on La Orilla Road NW, between Coors Blvd. and the Corrales Riverside Drain, zoned SU-1 for Church and Related Uses. The applicant proposes to implement development in two phases: Phase I consists of a one story 3,940 sf addition to an existing church facility, the expansion of the parking area, a retention pond and landscaping; Phase II consists of a two story addition of 8,064 sf. for classrooms, and additional parking and landscaping.
2. The existing church facility is two-story and contains a chapel, classrooms and offices with a total square footage of 10,506 sf. Two one-story dwellings are in the southern part of the site, used by the pastor and caretaker. The majority of the site is currently vacant and consists of bare ground.
3. The site is in the Developing Urban area of the Comprehensive Plan and within the boundaries of the West Side Strategic Plan and Segment 3 of the Coors Corridor Plan (1984, as amended).
4. The subject site was annexed in 2001 and received its current zoning designation in early 2002 as part of actions involving several sites throughout the City totaling approximately 140 acres (#1001445, 01EPC-01244, 8/30/2001, Council Bill O-02-16, Enactment 13-2002, 3/18/2002). The two houses and church were already on the site at that time.
5. The proposal furthers the following goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan (CP), West Side Strategic Plan (WSSP) and Coors Corridor Plan (CCP):
 - a. The Goals for the Developing Urban Area and Developed Landscape (CP), and CP Policy II.B.5.m, because the design of the new development will improve the visual quality of the built environment on the site.
 - b. CP Policy II.B.5.e and WSSP Policy 3.12, because the proposed development makes use of vacant area on a site that is contiguous to existing public facilities and services within the Taylor Ranch community.
 - c. CP Policy II.B.5.g, and CCP Policy 2.7, because grading of the site is kept to a minimum; the required retention pond follows the alignment of the existing drain; and most of the open areas are landscaped or covered with pervious paving materials that blend in with the natural backdrop of the Bosque.

- d. CP Policy II.C.8.d, WSSP Policies 3.18, 4.6 (Vegetation), CCP Policy 2.2, CCP Design Guideline 1 of Policy 4.b.4.B, because the landscape design will revegetate the site, enhance its appearance; and provide a “green” transition to the Bosque through extensive use of native trees, shrubs and grasses.
 - e. The CP Water Management Goal and Policy II.D.2.b, because the majority of the parking area will be covered with pervious material which encourages infiltration of runoff; a retention pond will accommodate all developed runoff on the site; and the proposed plant species are low and medium water use.
 - f. WSSP Policy 4.6 (Lighting), because the number of lightpoles is limited, their height is 16 ft. and they will only be used when the church facility is in use, which will mitigate light pollution.
 - g. CCP Policy 3.5, because the proposed expansion of the existing church facilities is compatible with the roadway function and existing zoning; and the site layout and landscaping will upgrade the condition of the buffer zone for the Bosque within the site.
 - h. CCP Policy 3.8, because the 100’ buffer zone for the Bosque will not contain new structures or vehicular facilities; bare ground will be replaced with a ponding area landscaped with native grasses; and the asphalt of the drive in front of the existing residences will be replaced with a pervious material that blends in with the natural soil color.
6. The proposal is in accordance with the following design policies, regulations and guidelines of the Coors Corridor Plan, a design overlay zone:
- a. Design Regulation A.2 and Design Guidelines A.5, 6 & 7, and B.1 of Policy 4.b.4, because the landscape design calls for screening of mechanical equipment; incorporates existing trees; and proposes species that are ecologically and visually harmonious with the Bosque.
 - b. Policy 4.b.5, and associated Design Regulations A.2, A.3, B.3 and Design Guideline B.1., because the off-street parking is located behind the building or landscaping; the paving materials are acceptable to the City; the landscaped beds are protected from vehicles; interior landscaping is provided; and the majority of the parking area is paved with pervious material.

- c. Policy 4.b.9 and Design Regulations 1 and 2, because the site lighting will not glare on residentially zoned property and is less than 20 feet high.
 - d. Design Regulations A.1, B.2 and Design Guidelines B.1 & 2 under Policy 4.b.10, because the architectural design of the two building phases will attain a visual completeness; the screening of mechanical equipment is integrated with the building structure; building entries are protected; and the predominant colors are earth tones that correspond to architectural elements of the existing church and additions.
 - e. Design Regulations B.1 & B.2, because the height and bulk of the building additions obstruct a relatively small proportion of the view from Coors Blvd. toward the Bosque and none of the view to the Sandia Mountains.
 - f. Policy 4.d.1 and Design Regulation 6, because the proposed wall sign is unobtrusive due to its location, size and design.
7. Property-owners within 100' and the Taylor Ranch, Alban Hills and Coors Trail Neighborhood Associations were notified of the proposal. A facilitated meeting took place on July 21, 2008. Written comments were received from members of the Taylor Ranch and Alban Hills NAs and testimony from the former was also heard on August 21, 2008. They had concerns about protecting the buffer zone along the Corrales Riverside Drain, the overall appearance of the building, the height of the additions and area lighting. No comments have been received on the revised submittal.

RECOMMENDATION - 08EPC 40079, September 18, 2008

APPROVAL of 08EPC 40079, a Site Development Plan for Building Permit, for Tract A-1-B Lands of Joel P. Taylor within Sec. 25 T11N R2E, based on the preceding Findings and subject to the following Conditions of Approval.

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL - 08EPC 40079, September 18, 2008, Site Development Plan for Building Permit

1. The EPC delegates final sign-off authority of this site development plan to the Development Review Board (DRB). The DRB is responsible for ensuring that all EPC Conditions have been satisfied and that other applicable City requirements have been met. A letter shall accompany the submittal, specifying all modifications that have been made to the site plan since the EPC hearing, including how the site plan has been modified to meet each of the EPC conditions.

Unauthorized changes to this site plan, including before or after DRB final sign-off, may result in forfeiture of approvals.

2. Prior to application submittal to the DRB, the applicant shall meet with the staff planner to ensure that all conditions of approval are met.
3. Site Development Plan:
 - a. The label for the area of asphalt within the 100' buffer zone that will be removed in Phase I shall include "and replace with landscaping".
 - b. The label for the metal screen on the church addition shall refer to sheets A301 and A302
4. **RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS FROM CITY ENGINEER, MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT and NMDOT:**

Conditions of approval for the proposed Site Development Plan for Building Permit shall include:

 - a. The Developer is responsible for permanent improvements to the transportation facilities adjacent to the proposed site development plan. Those improvements will include any additional right-of-way requirements, paving, curb and gutter, sidewalk and ADA accessible ramps that have not already been provided for. All public infrastructure constructed within public right-of-way or public easements shall be to City Standards. Those Standards will include but are not limited to sidewalks (std. dwg. 2430), driveways (std. dwg. 2425), private entrances (std. dwg. 2426) and wheel chair ramps (dwg. 2441).
 - b. Label and/or clarify curbing requirements between sidewalk adjacent to buildings and main drive aisle.
 - c. Provide an ADA accessible connection between proposed sidewalk adjacent to buildings and the existing sidewalk/ramp adjacent to La Orilla Road, at the NW corner of the main drive aisle entrance with La Orilla.
 - d. Remove line type between parking end isles at edge of asphalt, that implies curb and gutter.
 - e. Delete parking spaces 106 and 107 to increase throat length at east site drive.
 - f. Site plan shall comply and be designed per DPM Standards.
5. Vehicular Access, Circulation and Parking: All small car spaces shall be called out on the site development plan and reflected in the parking calculations (19 total).

6. Landscape Plan

- a. Shrubs and New Mexico olive shall be added next to the site drives at the north and south ends of the retention pond to provide a transition between the developed area and the buffer zone.
- b. In the landscaped bed west of the church addition, move the trees and shrubs at least 3' from the underground gas line.
- c. Two thirds of the street trees shall be shade trees, per the Street Tree Ordinance, and shall include Rio Grande cottonwood.
- d. Calculations:
 - Landscape area in the ROW is 2,200 sf,, which shall be subtracted from the total lot area and then added to the landscape area provided;
 - Delete line beginning “1/3 may be sidewalk...”;
 - The 20% parking area landscaping requirement shall refer to Off-street parking Policy 5.B in the Coors Corridor Plan.
- e. Plant legend:
 - Change mature spread of Artiplax (four wing saltbush) to 6' x 8'. Adjustments to the number of plants and coverage shall be made accordingly to achieve 75% minimum live ground cover.
 - Include native grass species in plant legend.
- f. Change note on drip system (last note) to provide shade trees with 150 gallons per week during establishment, per the City Forester's standard guidelines.

7. Grading & Drainage:

- a. Correct location of site on vicinity map.
- b. Eliminate “future path” indicated along Corrales Riverside Drain.

8. Architecture:

- a. The roof color shall be changed from white to a color that minimizes glare and the material shall be non-reflective. The new roof color shall be used instead of white as an accent color for the steeple.

 - b. Existing church:
 - Add a Keyed Note 17 and a corresponding label to Sheet 301 to indicate that the vertical accent panels will be painted to match the trellises on the additions.
 - Add a similar note, but numbered 19, to Sheet A302.
 - The keyed notes for repainting the wall panels shall clarify that the horizontal line is the dividing line between the two colors.
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***Carol Toffaleti
Planner***

cc: Riverside Church of Christ, 3100 La Orilla Rd. NW, Albuquerque, NM 87120
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Brett Lopez, Taylor Ranch NA, 4815 Northern Trail NW, Albuquerque, NM 87120
Rene Horvath, Taylor Ranch NA, 5515 Palomino Dr. NW, Albuquerque, NM 87120

Attachments

EPC Notice of Decision, August 21, 2008
J. Hoover, Water Utility Authority, emails dated 8/18/08 & 8/20/08
J.L. Evans, Parks & Recreation Department, email dated 8/20/08
M. Schmader, Open Space Division, email dated 8/20/08
L. Lewis, Open Space Division, emails dated 9/3/08 & 9/5/08
R. Horvath, Taylor Ranch NA, letter dated 8/18/08
C. Caruso-Mapel, Alban Hills NA, email dated 8/19/08

CITY OF ALBUQUERQUE AGENCY COMMENTS

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

CITY ENGINEER

Transportation Development (City Engineer/Planning Department): (revised 9/10/08)

- The Developer is responsible for permanent improvements to the transportation facilities adjacent to the proposed site development plan. Those improvements will include any additional right-of-way requirements, paving, curb and gutter, sidewalk and ADA accessible ramps that have not already been provided for. All public infrastructure constructed within public right-of-way or public easements shall be to City Standards. Those Standards will include but are not limited to sidewalks (std. dwg. 2430), driveways (std. dwg. 2425), private entrances (std. dwg. 2426) and wheel chair ramps (std. dwg. 2441).
- Label and/or clarify curbing requirements between sidewalk adjacent to buildings and main drive aisle (as shown on site plan?).
- Provide an ADA accessible connection between proposed sidewalk adjacent to buildings and the existing sidewalk/ramp adjacent to La Orilla Road, at the NW corner of the main drive aisle entrance with La Orilla.
- Remove line type between parking end isles at edge of asphalt, that implies curb and gutter.
- Delete parking spaces 106 and 107 to increase throat length at east site drive.
- Site plan shall comply and be designed per DPM Standards.

Hydrology Development (City Engineer/Planning Department): (revised 9/10/08)

- A conceptual grading and drainage plan is required prior to DRB.

Transportation Planning (Department of Municipal Development):

- Reviewed, and no comments regarding on-street bikeways, off-street trails or roadway system facilities.

Traffic Engineering Operations (Department of Municipal Development):

- No comments received.

Street Maintenance (Department of Municipal Development):

- No comments received.

New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT):

- No comments received.

RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS FROM CITY ENGINEER, MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT and NMDOT: (revised 9/10/08)

Conditions of approval for the proposed Site Development Plan for Building Permit shall include:

- a. The Developer is responsible for permanent improvements to the transportation facilities adjacent to the proposed site development plan. Those improvements will include any additional

right-of-way requirements, paving, curb and gutter, sidewalk and ADA accessible ramps that have not already been provided for. All public infrastructure constructed within public right-of-way or public easements shall be to City Standards. Those Standards will include but are not limited to sidewalks (std. dwg. 2430), driveways (std. dwg. 2425), private entrances (std. dwg. 2426) and wheel chair ramps (dwg. 2441).

- b. Label and/or clarify curbing requirements between sidewalk adjacent to buildings and main drive aisle.
- c. Provide an ADA accessible connection between proposed sidewalk adjacent to buildings and the existing sidewalk/ramp adjacent to La Orilla Road, at the NW corner of the main drive aisle entrance with La Orilla.
- d. Remove line type between parking end isles at edge of asphalt, that implies curb and gutter.
- e. Delete parking spaces 106 and 107 to increase throat length at east site drive.
- f. Site plan shall comply and be designed per DPM Standards.