

M-NCPPC



MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARK AND PLANNING

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3760
301-495-4500, www.mncppc.org

May 24, 2006

MEMORANDUM—MANDATORY REFERRAL

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: John A. Carter, Chief *JAC*
Community-Based Planning Division

Khalid Afzal, Team Leader *KA*
Georgia Avenue Planning Team

FROM: Frederick Vernon Boyd, Community Planner (301.495.4654) *FVB*
Georgia Avenue Planning Team

SUBJECT: Mandatory Referral 06501-MCPS-1: Albert Einstein High School
Performing Arts Signature Improvement Program – 11135 Newport Mill
Road, Wheaton, R-60 Zone, Kensington-Wheaton Master Plan

RECOMMENDATION: Approval with the following comments

1. Montgomery County Public Schools should submit a traffic study to satisfy Local Area Transportation Review if student enrollment exceeds 1,750 students.

PROJECT SUMMARY

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) proposes to make several physical improvements to its arts facility at Albert Einstein High School in Kensington. MCPS will construct a three-story addition to the existing building and renovate the instrumental music room in the existing structure. The project will provide classroom rehearsal and storage space for the school's music and dance activities. The new space will support the Performing Arts Signature Program.

The Site

Albert Einstein High School occupies a 27.2-acre site on Newport Mill Road, about 2400 feet from its intersection with University Boulevard. Immediately adjacent to the north is Newport Mill Middle School. To the south and east, between the campus and University Boulevard, is a portion of the Kensington Heights community. To the north and west is College View. These neighborhoods are dominated by single-family houses in the R-60 Zone.

The proposed addition will be located on the northwest side of the existing main school building. The area now houses four portable classrooms, which are located on an existing set of four basketball courts, and a paved area used by small school buses. This portion of the Einstein campus is adjacent to Newport Mill Local Park.

Project Description

MCPS plans to build a three-story addition with a façade that will match the materials of the existing high school building. The first and second levels will connect to the main building's first and second levels. The third level will have access to the main building by a staircase to the addition's second floor. The first floor will contain a new instrumental music room, practice rooms and instrument storage space. The music room will be open to the second floor, which may include an additional classroom, should MCPS decide to add it. The third floor will contain a new dance studio and has space for a new seminar room, should MCPS decide to add it.

MCPS will also renovate the existing instrumental music facilities in the existing building. The space will contain the music department offices, a small recording studio, a classroom for general music and guitar instruction, and a library.

If funds are available, MCPS will also convert a storage area in the existing building into three classrooms.

ANALYSIS

Master Plan

The 1989 *Master Plan for the Communities of Kensington-Wheaton* had as its objective the provision of "public school facilities needed to sustain high quality educational programs at reasonable cost." The Plan recommended reliance on the Master Plan for Educational Facilities, the Capital Improvements Program and the Annual Growth Policy as guides for developing public schools in the planning area.

Development Standards for the Zone

Development standards for the R-60 Zone set standards for lot size and width, minimum setbacks from streets and adjoining lots, main and accessory buildings and building heights. The zone requires lots to be at least 6,000 square feet in size, 60 feet wide at the front building line and 25 feet wide at the street line. Main buildings must be at least 25 feet from the street line, a total of 18 feet from adjacent property lines on the side, 25 feet from the rear property line, and no more than 35 feet high at the highest point of the roof surface.

Einstein's property meets these requirements. The school's property totals 27.2 acres. It is 182 feet wide at Newport Mill Road and 650 feet wide at the front building line. At the closest points to adjacent properties on the sides, the side yards are a total of 104 feet from the property lines. The school building is approximately 830 feet from the rear property line. The school, which has a flat roof, is 34 feet 4 inches high.

Environment

The Environmental Planning Unit of the Countywide Planning Division recommends approval of the mandatory referral.

Forest Conservation – This project qualifies for an exemption to the Forest Conservation Law because it is a modification of an existing developed property and has no more than 5,000 square feet of forest cleared. No forest will be cleared within a stream buffer or on property subject to Special Protection Water Quality Plan requirements. The property is not subject to requirements for a Tree Save Plan. It does not require subdivision.

Stormwater Management – The project has an approved stormwater management concept plan.

Green Building Design – The county's environmental policy required MCPS to submit a strategic plan on environmentally sensitive building design. The Plan, entitled *Green Schools Focus*, has been submitted to the County Council. In the Plan, MCPS pledged "to improve system design through introducing the latest high performance green building technologies (LEED) to improve sustainability and performance of buildings and reduce operating costs."

Transportation

The Transportation Planning Unit of the Countywide Planning Division has concluded that the proposed classroom addition meets the requirements of Local Area Transportation Review. A complete discussion of the staff review is in Attachment 6.

The transportation analysis uses a traffic statement submitted by MCPS and its consultants. The statement notes that the proposed improvements are not designed to increase the school's capacity. It also notes that Einstein, whose current program capacity is 1,430 students, enrolled 1,750 students in 2006. The 2007-2012 Capital Improvements Program for MCPS projects enrollment to be 1,626 students in 2007 and the program capacity to be 1,592 students. MCPS attributes the reduction in part to the reopening of Northwood High School. These steps will mean that Einstein will generate fewer peak hour trips than it does now, allowing this project to meet the requirements of Local Area Transportation Review. If enrollment exceeds 1,750 students, MCPS should conduct a traffic study to study the impacts of such an increase.

Transportation Planning staff also examined the impact of the addition on the school's circulation patterns. The addition will be built in an area now used on occasion by special activity buses. Two portable classrooms will be moved as part of this project, and the buses will use the paved area freed by the relocation. The county's Fire and Rescue Services have confirmed that existing emergency access to this part of the campus remains adequate. No other changes to circulation systems are planned.

OUTREACH

MCPS organized a Facility Advisory Committee for this project. The committee included school administrators and staff, project staff, Parent Teacher Association representatives, and community members. The committee met four times during the summer of 2005 to review, analyze and discuss the project.

Six civic and homeowners associations have been notified of the mandatory referral and the Planning Board public meeting.

CONCLUSION

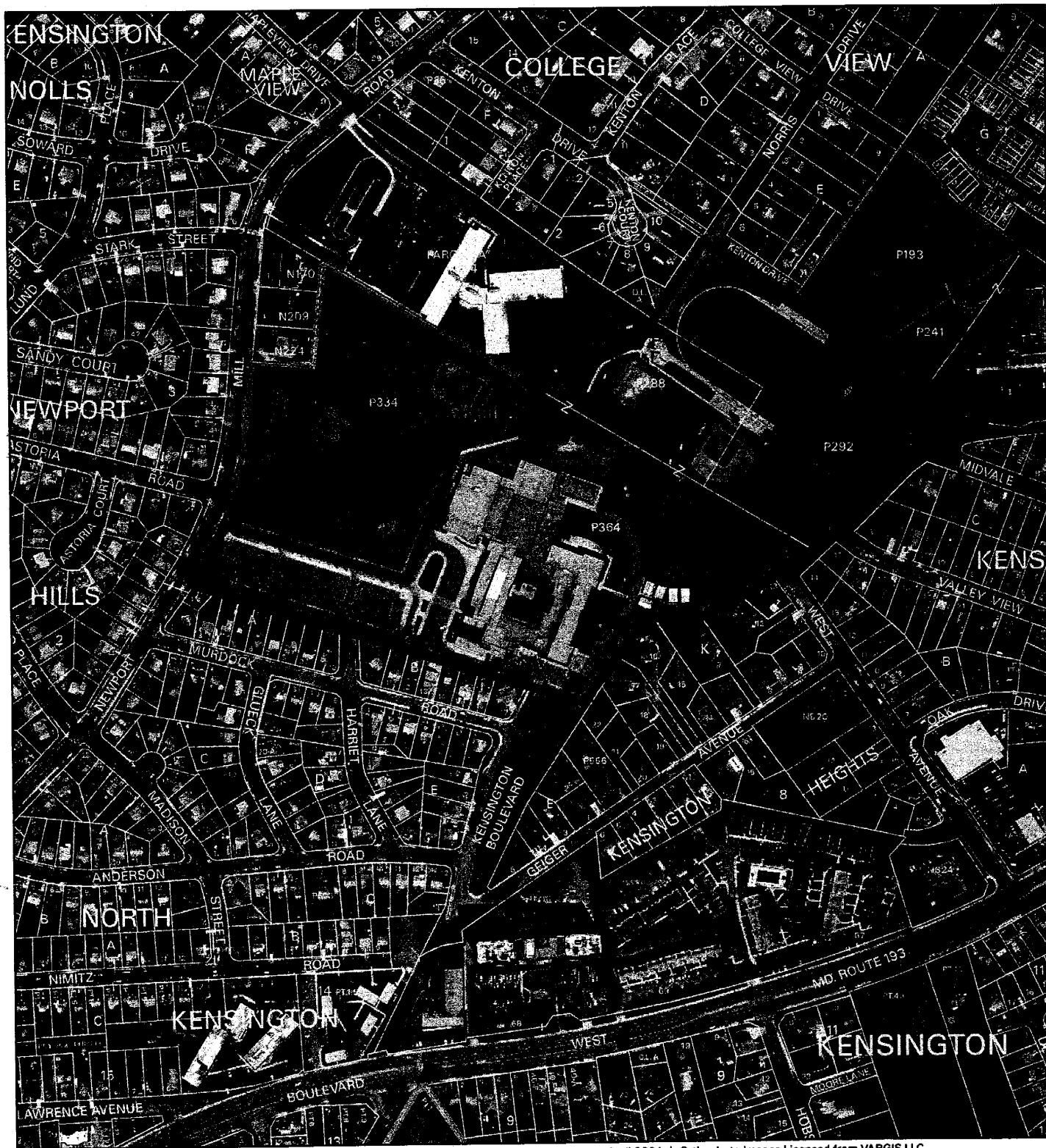
The proposed project meets the applicable standards and guidelines for the environment and it meets applicable guidelines for adequate public facilities. A public school at this location is consistent with the Kensington-Wheaton Master Plan. The staff recommends approval of this mandatory referral and transmittal of the comments.

FVB:ha: j:\2006 staff reports\team 5\Einstein Mandatory Referral

Attachments

1. Vicinity Map
2. Existing Site Plan
3. Proposed Site Plan
4. Key Plans
5. Memorandum from Environmental Planning
6. Memorandum from Transportation Planning

EINSTEIN HIGH SCHOOL



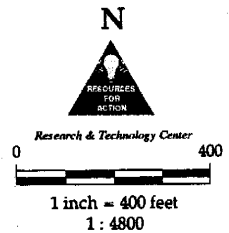
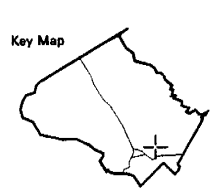
Map compiled on May 23, 2006 at 9:03 AM | Site located on base sheet no - 214NW03 | Date of Orthophotos - April 2004 | Orthophoto Images Licensed from VARGIS LLC.

NOTICE

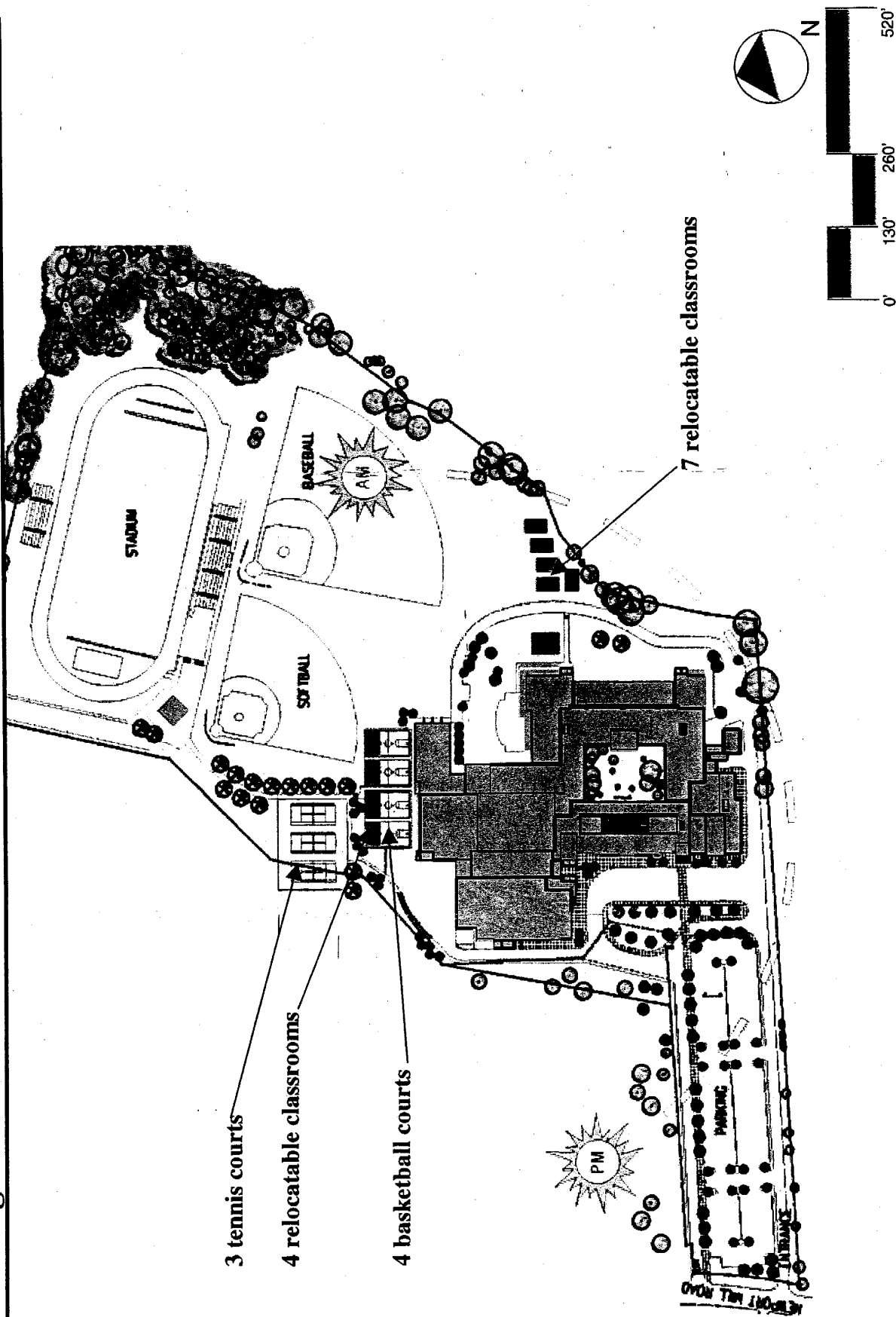
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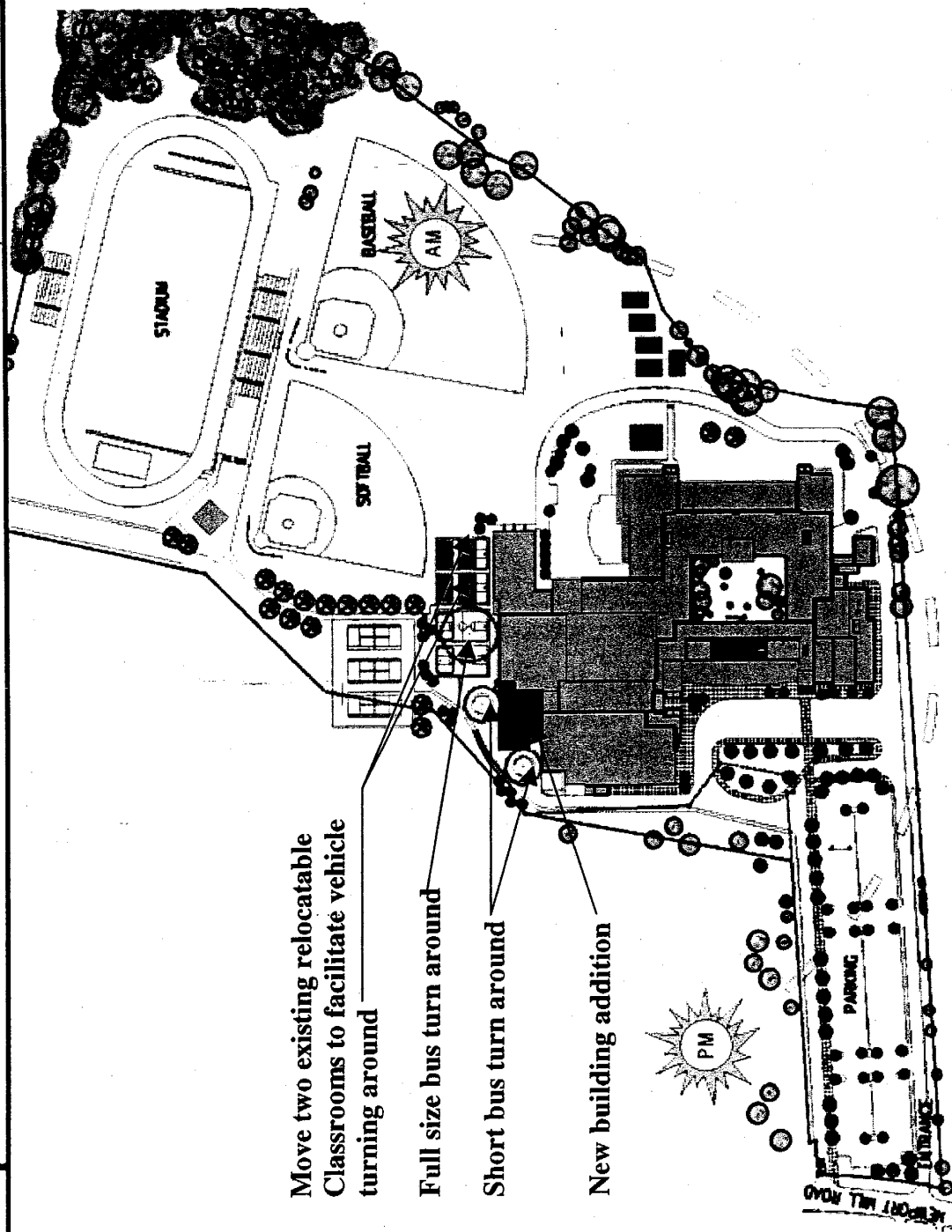


Existing Site Plan



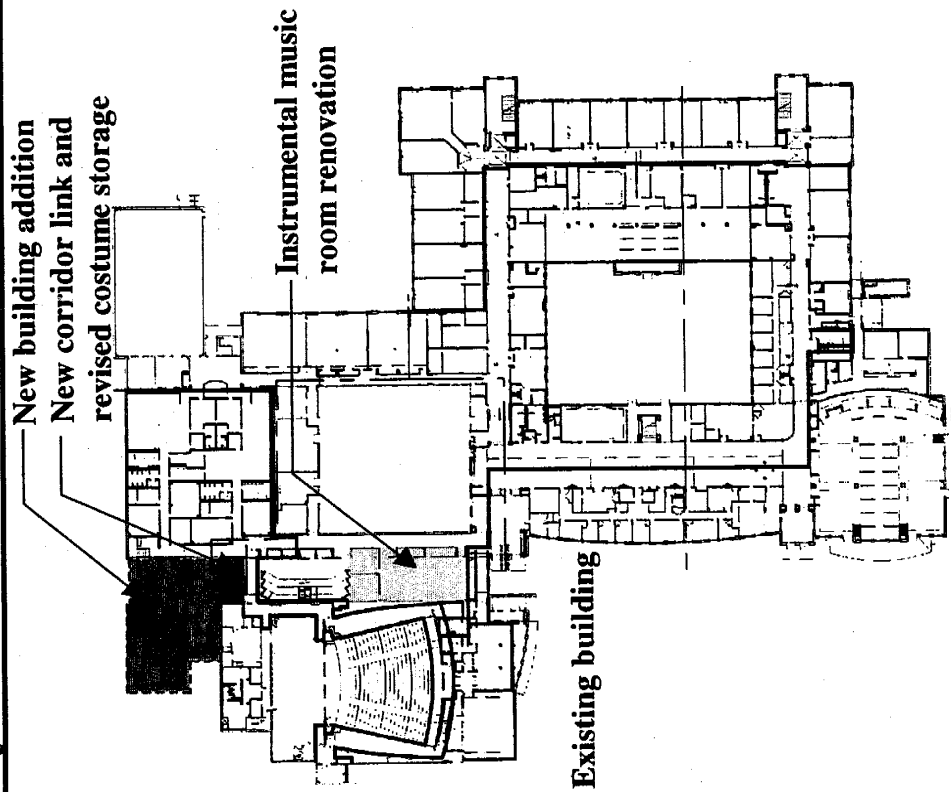
Albert Einstein High School
Performing Arts Signature Improvements
Grimm + Parker Architects

Proposed Site Plan

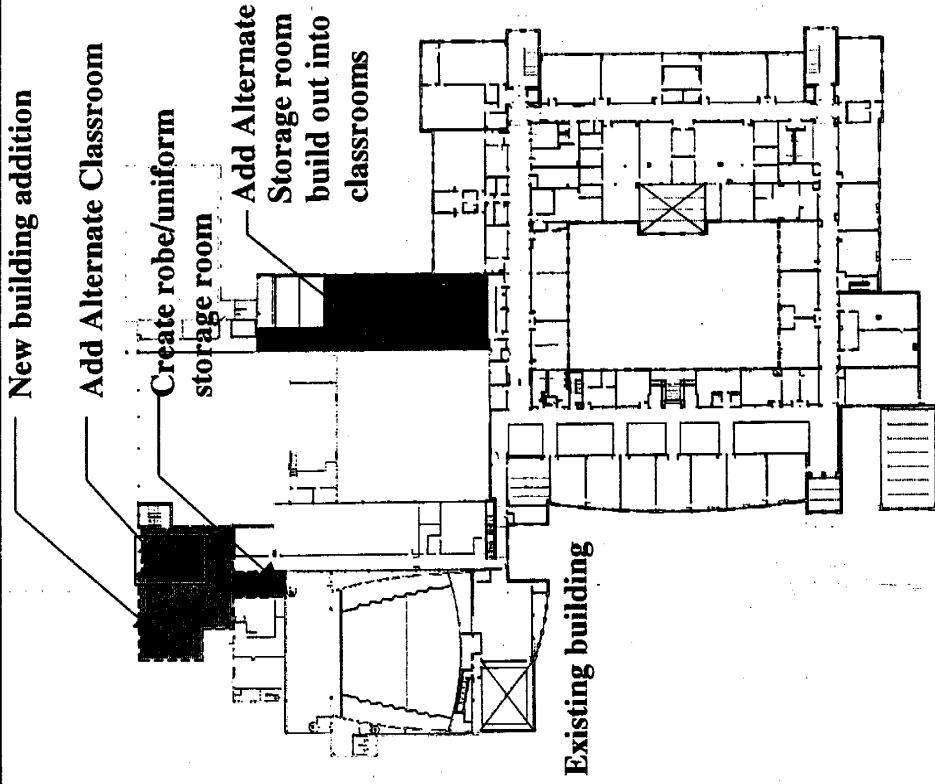


Albert Einstein High School
Performing Arts Signature Improvements
Grimm + Parker Architects

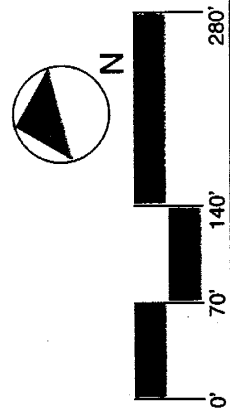
Key Plans



First Floor



Second Floor



Albert Einstein High School
Performing Arts Signature Improvements
Grimm + Parker Architects

ATTACHMENT 5

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 4, 2006

TO: Fred Boyd, Community Based Planning Division

VIA: Mary Dolan, Countywide Planning Division, Environmental 

FROM: Marion Clark, Countywide Planning Division, Environmental 

SUBJECT: Mandatory Referral No. MR-06501-MCPS-1
Albert Einstein High School School

Environmental Planning staff recommends **approval** of this mandatory referral.

Forest Conservation

A Forest Conservation Plan exemption was issued because this is a modification of an existing developed property with no more than a total of 5000 square feet of forest cleared; no forest clearing within a stream buffer or on property subject to Special Protection Area Water Quality Plan requirements; and it does not require a new subdivision plan. The plan is not subject to the requirements for a Tree Save Plan.

Stormwater Management

A Stormwater Management Concept Plan is approved for this project.

Green Building Design

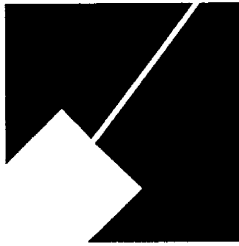
Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) submitted a strategic plan entitled *Green Schools Focus* to the County Council, as required by the County Environmental Policy. MCPS pledged in the strategic plan, to "improve system design through introducing the latest high performance green building technologies (LEED) to improve sustainability and performance of buildings and reduce operating costs."

Environmental Guidelines

There are no natural features of concern on the subject site in the area of construction.

ATTACHMENT 6

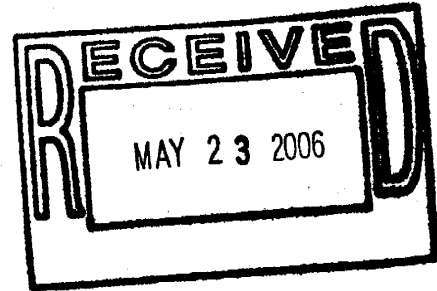
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May 23, 2006

MEMORANDUM

TO: Fred Boyd, Planner/Coordinator
Community Based Planning Division

VIA: Daniel K. Hardy, Supervisor *DKH*
Transportation Planning

FROM: David Paine, Planner/Coordinator *DP*
Transportation Planning

SUBJECT: Mandatory Referral MR 06501-MCPS-1
Albert Einstein High School
Kensington/Wheaton Policy Area

A proposed building addition to Albert Einstein High School is to include a music room, and three general classrooms. This memorandum is Transportation Planning staff's adequate public facilities (APF) review.

RECOMMENDATION

Transportation Planning staff has reviewed submitted information for the subject building addition to Albert Einstein High School and recommends the following to support approval of the mandatory referral:

- Montgomery County Public Schools should submit a traffic study to satisfy Local Area Transportation Review if future improvements are planned to accommodate student enrollment at Albert Einstein High School exceeding the current 1,750 students.

DISCUSSION

School Location, Access, and Circulation

Albert Einstein High School is located at 11135 Newport Mill Road in the Kensington/Wheaton Policy area. The school has primary access onto Newport Mill Road from two driveways with a secondary parking lot with access onto Kensington Boulevard. Currently, special activity buses use the area proposed for expansion for turn-around at the north end of the building. The proposal would relocate this turn-around area to an already paved pad currently occupied by portable classroom buildings that are being removed. Existing emergency vehicle access areas will be maintained along the side and rear of the building as confirmed by the Montgomery County fire marshal's office. The proposed addition will have no adverse effect on existing bus, passenger car, bicycle, or pedestrian circulation.

Master Plan Roadways

The *Master Plan for the Communities of Kensington-Wheaton*, approved and adopted in 1989, classifies and recommends right-of-way widths for significant roadways in the vicinity of Albert Einstein High School. The adjacent roadway, Newport Mill Road, is classified as a primary residential road built to standards with a minimum recommended 70-foot right-of-way. North of the school, Veirs Mill Road (MD 586), M-13, is classified as a major highway with a minimum recommended 120-foot right-of-way containing a six-lane divided cross section. West of the school, Connecticut Avenue (MD 185), M-7, is classified as a major highway with a minimum recommended 120-foot right-of-way containing a six-lane divided cross section. South of the school University Boulevard (MD 193), M-19, is classified as a major highway with a minimum recommended 120-foot right-of-way containing a six-lane divided cross section. The Master Plan is silent on the portion of Kensington Boulevard adjacent to the school.

The *Countywide Bikeways Functional Master Plan* classifies Newport Mill Road in the vicinity of Albert Einstein High School as SR-17, a signed, shared roadway, an alternative to biking on Veirs Mill Road.

Local Area Transportation Review

The proposed building addition is stated by Montgomery County Public Schools to replace existing portables and improve their music program facilities rather than increase the intensity of the school program. According to the traffic statement submitted by the applicant, current enrollment at Albert Einstein High School in 2006 is 1,750 students. Current program capacity is 1,430 students. Students in excess of the program are accommodated in portable classrooms that are not subject to mandatory referral. The program capacity in the 2007-2012 CIP is projected to be 1,592 and the projected 2007 enrollment is 1,626¹. This reduction is understood to be the result of the reopening of Northwood High School. When the CIP is implemented, Albert Einstein High School is projected to generate fewer peak-hour vehicular trips during the weekday morning peak period (6:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.) and the evening peak period (4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.). Staff therefore, finds that the proposed building addition satisfies

¹ FY 2007-FY2012 Capitol Improvements Program for MCPS.

the Local Area Transportation Review test and will have no adverse effect on area roadway conditions. However, should planned enrollment at the school exceed the 1,750 students currently enrolled, then a traffic study to assess the impacts should be conducted to satisfy APF review.

DP:gw

mno to Boyd re Albert Einstein HS