

TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

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From: Maribel Wong
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Date: March 3, 2023
Subject: Diener School at 9312 Old Georgetown Road Revised Transportation Management Plan
Conditional Use Application No. 23-06 and Preliminary Plan Application No. 120230040

Montgomery County Planning Department
The Diener School
The Diener School
BBS&G

Introduction

The following document includes revisions to the transportation management strategies to be employed by the Diener School as part of the proposed relocation to 9312 Old Georgetown Road in Bethesda, Maryland. The project is under review as part of Conditional Use Application No. 23-06 and Preliminary Plan Application No. 120230040.

Project Overview

As part of the proposed project, the Diener School proposes to renovate and expand an existing building at 9312 Old Georgetown Road to serve as its new location. This will be done in two (2) phases.

Phase 1 will renovate the existing 25,783 square foot building, install a new circulation pattern on the existing internal road network, and establish the student pick-up/drop-off zone on the south side of the school. Site parking for faculty, staff, and visitors is available in a total of 65 surface spaces along the school loop around the school building, behind the school building and along the front driveway during Phase 1. Phase 2 includes the addition of an 11,000 square foot gymnasium. Phase 2 parking is available in 46 parking spaces total distributed along the school loop and front driveway. The facility is proposed to support an enrollment of up to 120 students in kindergarten through 8th grade with up to 57 teachers and staff. The school anticipates that enrollment and staffing may not reach the maximums assumed for purposes of the submitted LATR, and that an increase in non-vehicular modes of travel to/from the school may follow the move to the new site, which has increased access to transit and protected bicycle facilities compared to the existing campus location at 11701 Danville Drive in North Bethesda, MD. The LATR analysis was based on a staff size of 66 teachers and faculty as a conservative measure. The Applicant has determined that a staff size of 57 is a more realistic estimate of the maximum number of staff that will be needed if enrollment should rise to 120 students.

The Diener School will implement a comprehensive Transportation Management Plan (TMP) for operations at the new location, expected to open in the Fall of 2024.

This TMP was prepared to accomplish the following goals of the Diener School:

1. Manage the flow of traffic at the two (2) site driveways in a manner that allows efficient traffic movements into and out of the School with minimal impact to the surrounding transportation network.
2. Ensure that circulation on site is conducted in an organized, safe, and efficient manner that supports and accommodates pick-up/drop-off activity and associated queueing on-site.

3. Minimize, wherever reasonably possible, the volume of vehicles coming to and from the Diener School so as to support goals 1 and 2 above.

The implementation of the TMP is part of the Applicants commitment to minimize any potential impact to Old Georgetown Road. The proposed TMP is also consistent with the results of the capacity and queueing analyses included in the LATR. The LATR analyses results indicate the proposed conditions at the project site exhibit efficient circulation within the internal site and queues will not spill back onto Old Georgetown Road.

School Operations Overview

Established in 2007, the Diener School offers individualized and personalized multisensory instruction to students in kindergarten through 8th grade. Teacher hours are between 7:45 AM to 3:45 PM. The student school day begins at 8:00 AM with a 3:00 PM dismissal.

The school intends to open the new facility with its current complement of 39 staff members and expects to grow to 100 students and 50 staff members over the next 10 years. The maximum staff size expected to support an enrollment of 120 students is 57. The submitted LATR is based on a potential ultimate expansion up to 120 students and 66 staff members to present a conservative analysis of the potential impact.

Before/After School Programming

The Diener School offers before school and after school programs that include private tutoring, therapy sessions, and after school clubs. Before school individual sessions begin at 7:00 AM and after school sessions run between 3:00 and 5:00 PM. Enrollment in the before and after school private sessions is limited. The school also offers after school clubs between 3:00 and 4:00 PM. Enrollment and participation in after school clubs varies and will not exceed 35 students and 10 staff at the Old Georgetown Road location.

School Bus Operations

The Diener School operates a bus program with two (2) routes providing transportation to students from nearby neighborhoods in Maryland, Washington, D.C., and Virginia. Buses arrive on campus before 8:00 AM and depart shortly before 3:00 PM.

Summer Programs

During the summer months, the Diener School offers summer camp and private therapy/tutoring to a small number of students. The Diener School proposes a maximum summer camp enrollment of 50 students with 24 staff members.

Special Events

The Diener School hosts a number of school-day events, after-hours weekday events, and weekend events with participation that ranges from small groups to the entire school community. These events include Grandparents' Day, graduation ceremonies, Back to School Night, a middle school Valentine's Dance, Summer Playdates, etc. Events are held both in indoor and outdoor spaces on-site. Special events operating measures will be implemented to ensure impact to the community is minimized.

Parking

Phase 1 includes 65 parking spaces. Phase 2 includes 46 parking spaces after the building addition.

Transportation Management Plan (TMP)

The TMP for the Diener School includes three (3) components: (1) the minimization of vehicular traffic; (2) the management of on-site traffic; and (3) special events operations.

The plan includes efforts to encourage carpooling and the use of the school bus service to minimize vehicular traffic in terms of both 1) total volume and 2) volumes during the roadway peak hours. The management of on-site traffic includes measures and

policies to optimize vehicle circulation; the monitoring of on-site traffic flow, including carpool drop-off/pick-up procedures; and the education of families and staff commuting to and from the Diener School.

Transportation Coordinator

The School will designate a Transportation Coordinator to oversee the implementation of the TMP and the advancement of strategies that optimize circulation on site for the benefit of the members of the Diener community, surrounding neighbors, and the general traveling public. This plan will be reviewed and updated on an as needed basis.

The Transportation Coordinator will also oversee outreach and education efforts to ensure Diener families, staff, and visitors are aware of the transportation management measures designed to make the trip to and from the Diener School a pleasant experience.

The Transportation Coordinator will consider additional measures if traffic problems exist following the implementation of the TMP. Staggered pick-up/drop-off times will also be considered by the School if queuing on site becomes an on-going issue.

TMP Outreach and Education

A clause will be included in the enrollment and registration materials signed by parents stating that compliance with the Transportation Management Plan is required. Regular parent communications will highlight the following:

- Parents are not allowed to park in neighborhood roads to walk their students to/from school.
- Blocking traffic by queueing on Old Georgetown Road is prohibited.
- Pick-up/Drop-offs on Old Georgetown Road are prohibited.

Minimization of Vehicular Traffic

The Diener School will implement the following strategies to minimize overall traffic generation:

Student Families Carpooling

- The Diener School's Transportation Coordinator will direct efforts to encourage, coordinate, and maintain carpools for enrolled students.
- The Transportation Coordinator is authorized to undertake the following steps to encourage and support carpooling at the Diener School:
 - In the informational communications to parents that address enrollment details, include an electronic response form to address carpool needs.
 - The Transportation Coordinator will collect responses and work with administrative personnel to determine what assistance can be provided or recommended to participating and interested families.
 - The Transportation Coordinator will maintain a list of carpools as well as a list of those who have shown an interest in forming or joining a carpool and periodically review the list for carpooling opportunities.
 - Families will be encouraged to carpool whenever possible. They will be reminded that the School's Transportation Coordinator is available to assist in addressing carpool and transportation concerns.
 - In addition to the above, the Diener School will promote and encourage carpooling in the following:
 - School weekly electronic newsletters.
 - Enrollment and registration packets and materials sent to parents.

School Bus Transportation

The School is dedicated to encouraging travel by bus and will promote the school bus program with the following:

- Parents will be notified of bus routes and schedules during registration. Families will be encouraged to participate in this program in communications to parents sent by the School.
- The School will continue its efforts to establish new school bus routes where sufficient ridership can be attained and to increase ridership for existing routes.
- The School will undertake the following steps to increase awareness of the Diener School bus travel to and from the School:
 - Include information about the bus program in all summer electronic newsletters and in periodic e-mailings to parents throughout the school year
 - Lead a discussion/send survey headed by the Transportation Coordinator to investigate ways to increase bus ridership.

Staff and Faculty Incentives

The School will offer the following incentives to reduce single-occupancy travel for staff and teachers:

- Provide a minimum of three (3) conveniently located parking spaces reserved for carpools.
- Provide bicycle parking in a secure and easily accessible area for faculty and staff.
 - Six (6) short-term bicycle parking spaces will be provided in convenient locations and five (5) long-term bicycle parking spaces will be provided in a secure location and facility within the existing building.
- Participate in the SmartBenefits Program or equivalent to allow employees to set aside up to \$300/month in pre-tax funds (or current amount legally allowed under Federal law) through their paycheck deductions for transit or vanpool expenses.
- Distribute information on the Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) program available to commuters who do not drive to work.
- Provide information packages to every staff member at the beginning of the academic year and throughout the year in regular staff communications on the available transit/carpool incentives to promote alternative modes of transportation to and from the school.

Management of On-Site Traffic

The School will implement operational and circulation policies to maintain efficient traffic flow on campus that avoids potential queueing through the public right of way. Management of traffic flow and on-campus circulation will have both physical and human components.

Traffic Management Tools

- The Diener School will implement a pick-up/drop-off plan with a designated pick-up/drop-off zone and circulation pattern to maximize vehicle queueing stacking capacity.
- The pick-up/drop-off plan, circulation pattern, and any other relevant information associated with minimizing transportation impact, including the restrictions listed below, will be shared with families every semester and reminders will be included in periodic electronic newsletters.
 - Pick-up/drop-off activity outside of the school grounds will be prohibited.
 - Blocking traffic on Old Georgetown Road is prohibited under all circumstances. A Staff member will also be located on the school property near the entrance to wave vehicles to the front school loop in order to prevent spillover onto Old Georgetown Road.
 - The School will ensure families are aware of these restrictions during orientation and in enrollment and registration materials signed by parents.

- The Diener School pick-up/drop-off plan will be monitored to optimize the number of staff assisting at the pick-up/drop-off zone and staff located throughout the site along the school loop so as to ease congestion, promote pedestrian safety, and prevent traffic backup on adjacent roadways.

Human Controls

- The School will rely on teacher and staff participation during the morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up to facilitate traffic movement on-site.
- The School will position staff members at appropriate places on site to minimize delays, facilitate efficient circulation flow, and prevent traffic backup on Old Georgetown Road.
- In the event of queues that reach Old Georgetown Road, staff members will direct vehicles to use the front school loop/driveway.
 - Vehicles will be advised to not circle on neighborhood streets.

Special Events Operations

During special events, the School will provide a valet parking service to optimize the parking capacity onsite. With valet parking operations in place, approximately 114 valet parking spaces total will be available onsite during phase 1 and approximately 87 valet parking spaces total will be available onsite during phase 2.

The School's events scheduler and Transportation Coordinator will ensure that activities on campus are organized so that they avoid traffic movements during peak hours to the extent reasonably possible.

If additional parking is anticipated to be needed, the School will arrange off-site parking at nearby facilities and/or shuttles will be provided to nearby Metro Stations.