Olivet Presbyterian Church Preschool Special Use Permit Amendment

PROJECT PROPOSAL

To provide a Christian preschool opportunity for families in our community, preparing children to attend Kindergarten, academically, socially, and spiritually. The maximum capacity of 24 students per day has been reached with a significant waitlist. Therefore, to meet the needs of the community we would like to expand, over the next several years, to a maximum of 48 students per day, and increase time of operation from 8am-1pm to 8am-2pm, to allow for extended pickup for students enrolled in enrichment activities.

Design: Olivet Preschool will operate September 1-May 31, on the Albemarle County School schedule when in session. It will consist of four classes: two classes for 2-year-olds, one class for 3 and 4-year-olds, and one pre-Kindergarten class, with the potential to have an additional class of 3 and 4-year olds or pre-K, depending on the needs of the community. The capacity for the preschool will not exceed 48 students per day. The 2-year-old class would operate in the mornings, 9am to 12pm, two days a week; the 3 and 4-year-olds class would operate in the mornings, 9am to 12pm, 3 days a week; and the pre-K class would operate in the mornings, 9am to 12pm, 5 days a week. Opportunities for extended day activities will allow for parent pick-up as late as 2pm.

Public Need and Benefit: The benefit of a preschool education in preparing children for kindergarten and academic success later in school is well established. In addition, demographic data indicates a sizable population of preschool aged children within a 5-mile radius of the Olivet Church. The preschool currently offers scholarships (full and partial), and with increased enrollment, these scholarships may increase.

Administration: The Olivet Preschool is overseen by the Preschool Committee which is appointed and directed by the Olivet Session (governing board). The Preschool Committee recruits and hires a Preschool Director. Olivet's Director of Finance and Operations does the Olivet Preschool bookkeeping.

Staffing: For children ages 2-6, Virginia law requires 1 adult for every 1-10 children and 2 adults for 11-20 children. In keeping with the Olivet Child Protection Policy however, each Olivet Preschool class must be staffed by 2 adults- a lead teacher with a college level degree in education, and an assistant with gifts for and experience in working with children. Background checks and First Aid, CPR and AED certifications will be required of all staff. Additional church and Preschool staff provide weekly art instruction, music instruction, and Chapel activities.

Facilities: The Olivet Preschool uses all four existing elementary Sunday School classrooms in the basement of the Olivet Church, one for each class. Basement bathrooms and a small kitchen in the basement are used as well. The sanctuary and/or Fellowship Hall will be used for Chapel time and music instruction. No change to the site or building will be required for the enrollment increase to 48 students (see attachment *"Olivet Presbyterian Church Sunday School and Preschool Area"*).

Hours of Operation: 8:00am-2:00pm, Monday through Friday. Preschool classes take place 9:00am-12:00pm, with extended daycare and enrichment activities from 12:00pm-2:00pm.

Surrounding Properties: Our surrounding properties are single family residential. We have operated our current preschool for nine years in harmony with our neighbors. The voluntary and mandatory site plan plantings have matured and provide a wonderful buffer between our property and neighboring properties.

Character of Property: Our property contains the existing 143-year-old historic church with additions that provide us with meeting rooms, a Fellowship Hall, Sunday and preschool classrooms, cemetery, manse, parking lots, playground and wooded areas, all located on 9.2 acres. It should be noted that our average Sunday worship attendance is around 180 people and the current parking and entrances handle this volume of traffic very successfully.

Parking: Drop off for the 3 and 4-year-old and Pre-K classes is in front of the sanctuary/church office doors (see attachment *"Preschool Student Drop-off Diagram"*). The preschool will continue to use the handicap-accessible ramp entrance to the basement classrooms on the west side of the church building for pick up. The adjoining parking lot has 18 spaces (3 handicap). A larger parking lot containing 34 spaces is located west of the preschool. The 2-year-olds will be dropped off and picked up in their classroom by their parents, who will also use these parking lots.

Outdoor activities: The preschool will use the outside playground located on the southwest side of the church for at least 30 minutes of play and physical activity each day. The playground is located near the center of our 9.2-acre site, which reduces the likelihood of any disturbance to our neighbors. Only one class/age level will use the playground at a time, therefore, no more than 12 children supervised by 2 adults will be on the playground at any given time. Occasionally the children may participate in outdoor educational or enrichment activities in the woods on our site with little to no noise impact on our neighbors.

Funding: The Olivet Preschool is self-funding, through monthly tuition fees paid by attending families. The Olivet Church supports the ministry of the preschool with facilities, utilities, publicity, insurance, and administrative support.

CONSISTENCY WITH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Comprehensive Plan designates our property as a Rural Area. Under the *Rural Areas* section of the Comprehensive Plan, allowing a preschool expansion to 48 students supports the following Guiding Principles:

- *Rural citizens supported by community meeting places, a basic level of services and rural organizations and other cultural institutions at traditional rural scales, with opportunities to take part in community life and decisions.*
- *Protect and enhance rural quality of life for present and future Rural Area residents*
- *Address the needs of existing residents without fostering growth and future suburbanization of Rural Areas*

Impact on Public Facilities and Infrastructure: Located in a rural/agricultural zone of the county, the church is not serviced by public water and sewage; trash collection is privately contracted. Olivet Preschool occasionally visits public parks and facilities such as libraries. These visits are scheduled and adequately supervised by staff and volunteer parents. The main public impact is on the roads as parents drive their children to and from the preschool. It should be noted that these parents would otherwise be driving their children to preschools in Charlottesville or Crozet, likely travelling greater distances on county roads. On days with full enrollment, the traffic impact may involve 48 cars at most, arriving and departing between 8am and 9am and then again at dismissal.

IMPACT ON ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES

We are not proposing any building addition or site change to accommodate the day care/preschool amendment which will allow 48 students to attend each day. This half-day program will help reduce the childcare and preschool needs of nearby residents without encouraging suburbanization or impacting the character of local historic, scenic, or cultural resources.

Health Department: During the 2015 Special-Use Permit approval process, we had Old Dominion Engineering evaluate our septic system. The existing system met the standards for a 24-student preschool. The report stated that no additional expansion would be possible without an upgrade or replacement of our system. We have hired the same firm to design and oversee the construction and the Health Department approval process for a new or upgraded system.

VDOT COMPLIANCE IMPROVEMENTS 2015

During the Special Use Permit application process in 2015, we were required to modify our east entrance, changing it to a RIGHT TURN ONLY exit. This gave us adequate sight distance to gain approval from VDOT to establish a preschool.