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From: Thomas Ruff, PE, PTOE, AICP

RE: City Church
Parking Analysis

Date: November 12, 2024

Copy: Craig Kotarski, PE (TG)

Introduction

Timmons Group completed a parking analysis for City Church, in coordination with their application for a Special Use Permit to construct a multipurpose facility, located at 1010 Rio Road in Albemarle County, Virginia. The proposed development will maintain the 320 existing seats within the current assembly building, while the new facility will allow for office space and a gym that can serve multiple purposes for the congregation.

City Church is requesting to construct new parking areas on its existing site to meet current needs. The existing site on Rio Road currently features 74 parking spaces. The request is to accommodate additional 87 parking spaces for a total of 161 parking spaces on site.

The following memo describes the existing conditions and constraints, as well as justification for requesting the approval of the Special Use Permit.

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Existing Parking Demand

Parking was observed on multiple Sundays from December 2023 to November 2024 to understand the existing parking demand and the potential for future parking needs. The parking data is reported as follows:

Date	Total Parking Observed
12/17/23	136
1/21/24	182
1/28/24	176
9/22/24	144
10/6/24	171
10/13/24	145
10/27/24	150
11/3/24	144

Over the eight (8) Sundays observed in the previous 12 months, the average number of parked cars during a service has been 156 cars.

Reason for Special Use Permit

The church has a shared parking agreement with CATEC (Charlottesville-Albemarle Technical Education Center) to fulfill the overall parking needs during overflow periods. The shared parking agreement with CATEC is verbal in nature and not a binding document. The agreement is limited and could be revoked at any time, disallowing City Church use of the CATEC parking lot in the future. The issue at hand for the agreement is the potential need for an "indefinite" timeline of use of the CATEC parking area, which creates legal challenges.

During the recent sale of the CATEC property from Albemarle County to the City of Charlottesville, the holder of the verbal agreement changed. Although the City has not made any attempts to change the verbal agreement, there is a possibility that a formal agreement could not be reached or the verbal agreement will not be held. The concern for City Church is that the property could be sold or repurposed by the City of Charlottesville at any time and disallow parking for outside users, at which time City Church would not be able to accommodate its existing use on site.

As noted, the existing conditions accommodate only 74 parking spaces on site at 1010 Rio Road. On a typical Sunday, roughly 82 vehicles are parked at offsite using the CATEC parking area. This accounts for roughly 50% of the parking capacity of the City Church on a daily Sunday.

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Albemarle County Zoning Ordinance

The Albemarle County zoning ordinance sets the number of required spaces for each land use. In accordance with Section 4.12.6 of the Ordinance, the number of parking spaces is one space for every three fixed seats for church assembly usage. Per the Albemarle County zoning ordinance, total parking for the 320 fixed seat assembly will require 107 parking spaces to satisfy the zoning ordinance. In addition, the Albemarle County zoning ordinance has a maximum limit on parking of 150% of the minimum, which translates to 161 parking spaces.

Mitigation Efforts

In response to existing parking challenges and the uncertain CATEC parking agreement, City Church has revised its service patterns from offering three (3) services on Sunday mornings to two (2) on Sunday mornings and one (1) on Sunday evenings. In addition, the morning services have been split around the ideal time of 10 AM to further distribute the peak traffic. As shown in the parking data, after implementation of the service changes in Spring 2024, City Church has been able to reduce its maximum parking demand to be within the 161, although with some dates and larger services still reaching beyond that maximum.

Conclusions

- The Albemarle County ordinance requires a minimum of one space per three fixed seats (107 parking spaces) and a maximum of 150% of the minimum (161 parking spaces).

- On a typical Sunday during the peak hour of parking need for City Church, the observed parking demand is approximately 156 parking spaces. The parking demand was observed over multiple days/months and is considered a repeatable demand for a typical Sunday.

- To accommodate the peak parking demand, City Church is requesting to construct an expansion of the existing parking area to accommodate up to 161 parking spaces on site. The requested number of parking spaces is equal to the zoning ordinance maximum (161). The requested number is 150% of the zoning ordinance maximum.

- Since the request exceeds the Albemarle County zoning ordinance for 120% of the minimum number of parking spaces required, City Church is requesting a Special Exemption in accordance with Section 33.9 of the zoning ordinance.

- The adjacent parking area at CATEC is subject to a verbal agreement and there are not options for completing a formal agreement for an indefinite period of time. There are no other adjacent parking areas available to assist with the documented parking demand and a lack of sufficient parking may increase the chances that overflow vehicles illegally park on other properties or create other nuisance to nearby properties and rights-of-way.

- Given the documented issues of overparking on the current City Church site, the measured parking demand that is above the County zoning ordinance minimums, the consistent use of overflow parking at CATEC, and the uncertainty of future use of the CATEC parking area, it is recommended that the Special Use Permit be granted to City Church to install 161 parking spaces at 1010 Rio Road with the other site improvements.