

**CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH
[DRAFT] PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
SEPTEMBER 10, 2008**

The Regular Meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of Manhattan Beach, California, was held on the 10th day of September, 2008, at the hour of 6:35 p.m., in the City Council Chambers of City Hall, at 1400 Highland Avenue, in said City.

A. ROLL CALL

Present: Fasola, Paralusz, Powell, Seville-Jones and Chair Lesser
Absent: None
Staff Present: Richard Thompson, Director of Community Development
Eric Haaland, Associate Planner
Angelica Ochoa, Assistant Planner
Esteban Danna, Assistant Planner
Eric Zandvliet, Traffic Engineer
Recording Secretary: Sarah Boeschen

B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – August 27, 2008

Commissioner Powell requested that the language of the motion on page 7 of the August 27 minutes be corrected to reflect that Commissioner Fasola made the motion and that he seconded.

Commissioner Powell requested that language be added on line 7 in the second paragraph of page 6 to read: “He said that he would support striking the requirement included in Condition 18 that an employee be required to pour samples as long as an employee is present and a patron is prohibited from pouring and would support the removal of Condition 20.”

A motion was MADE and SECONDED (Seville-Jones/Paralusz) to approve the minutes of August 27, 2008, as amended.

AYES: Fasola, Paralusz, Powell, Seville-Jones and Chair Lesser
NOES: None.
ABSENT: None.
ABSTAIN: None.

C. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

None.

D. PUBLIC HEARINGS (CONTINUED)

1. Consideration of a Use Permit and Variance for Construction of Two Commercial Buildings Located at the Northwest Corner of Sepulveda and Manhattan Beach Boulevards

Associate Planner Haaland summarized the staff report. He indicated that the proposal is for a 4,010 square foot bank building at the front of the property and a 2,319 square foot retail building at the rear. He indicated that a Variance is requested for the height of the tower elements as well as the parapet for the bank building. He indicated that the Commission

supported the Variance request with a condition that the rear building be stepped below the height limit to an equivalent amount that the front building exceeds the height limit. He indicated that an exception, provided for by code, is also being requested to exceed the 12 foot height limit for two parking lot light poles. He said that the outstanding issues after the previous hearing included relocating the proposed compact spaces further from the entrance of the retail building. He commented that the spaces are now proposed to be located across the parking aisle adjacent to the north property line. He indicated that a letter was received from the applicant's consultant regarding the soil vapor extraction system which provides comments regarding the type and size of the system. He said that the letter states that they are confident that any noise and odors can be mitigated from impacting the adjacent neighbors. He stated that a landscaping plan has been provided with details on the types and sizes of trees that are proposed. He indicated that the applicant is requesting that the 36-inch box tree that is proposed near the entry to the driveway be planted after the extraction equipment is removed, as there is not sufficient space for both. He pointed out that there is a condition that no signage shall be permitted facing the adjacent residences. He said that staff is recommending that the Commission adopt the draft Resolution approving the project.

In response to a question from Chairman Lesser, Director Thompson indicated that staff is anticipating more information from the applicant to address the concerns of the Commissioners regarding any noise and odor impacts from the soil vapor extraction system to the neighbors.

In response to a question from Commissioner Seville-Jones, Director Thompson commented that the applicant anticipates that the 36-inch-box tree can be planted after the vapor extraction equipment is removed. He suggested that the Commission consider temporarily eliminating one of the surplus compact spaces in order to allow space for the tree to be planted sooner while the equipment is in place.

Commissioner Seville-Jones said that she would like to know more from the applicant regarding the length of time that the vapor extraction system would need to be in place.

In response to a question from Commissioner Powell, Associate Planner Haaland indicated that there is a condition requiring that narrower trees be located in the northwest corner of the site temporarily to buffer the view from the adjacent neighbors until such time as the equipment can be removed and a 36-inch box tree can be planted.

In response to a comment from Commissioner Powell, Associate Planner Haaland said that it has been common to regulate parking for employees in Use Permits, although requirements have never been imposed for customer parking. He indicated that it may be appropriate to include language requiring that business vendors park on site.

Mark Harrigian, representing the applicant, said that the remediation that is occurring on the site is for the ground water rather than the soil. He said that the vapor extraction system was removed previously in the hope that no further remediation will be necessary. He stated that Shell is evaluating the data to determine whether any additional remediation will be required. He indicated that once it is determined that no more remediation is required, there will be additional monitoring for a year. He indicated that any future remediation will be to clean any ground water off site. He said that any future remediation system that would be required would be an oxygen injection system that would place oxygen into the ground water which reacts with the methane in the water to enhance the remediation process. He indicated that there are all levels of systems, and the particular type that is used is based upon the individual case. He stated that the system can be encased with foam or mufflers. He said that the oxygen injection equipment would be compatible to residential neighborhoods and would create no health concerns. He indicated that the system would be enclosed within a structure and would be

surrounded by landscaping to help buffer any noise. He said that they recognize the sensitivity with the site being located near to residences. He commented that Shell is hoping that no more remediation will be required on the site; however, they are confident that they can mitigate any concerns regarding noise if equipment is required.

Louis Simons, Stantec Consulting, said that Shell is currently evaluating the options to determine any remediation that will still be required. He stated that they have determined that the soil is clean, and any additional remediation that will be required would be for the ground water in the surrounding area. He said that the existing system on the site will not be required to remain. He indicated that the ground water is located 115 feet below the surface, and a different type of clean-up system is recommended for its remediation. He indicated that the unit pushes oxygen into the ground water which enhances the biodegradation of the hydrocarbons in the water.

In response to a question from Commissioner Seville-Jones, **Mr. Harrigian** said that Shell expects to cooperate with the City to ensure that noise suppression would be provided. He said that he would not object to a condition that adequate noise suppression would be provided that is enclosed and shrouded by shrubbery.

In response to a question from Commissioner Seville-Jones regarding the equipment being moved closer to Sepulveda Boulevard and further from the residences, **Mr. Harrigian** indicated that the equipment is most effective directly above the area where there is contamination. He said that the ground water flows from the site to the west, and the equipment becomes less effective the further it is placed to the east. He said that there would not be a benefit to moving the equipment further to the east given that the noise would already be suppressed. He indicated that moving it would result in the system being required to remain on the site for a longer period of time.

Mr. Simons commented that such systems are very effective in cleaning ground water contamination and would only be in place temporarily.

In response to a question from Commissioner Paralusz, **Mr. Harrigian** said that the soil has been determined to be clean, and currently the only concern is with the ground water.

In response to a question from Commissioner Powell, **Mr. Simons** said that once it has been determined that the remediation has been completed, the site will continue to be monitored for a year. He said that Shell would then prepare a case closure request documenting the historical activities on the site with the initial concentration and the final concentrations. He said that there then is a review period from the regional board of the case closure request. He indicated that he is not certain of the notification that is provided to the City.

Director Thompson pointed out that staff conducts an annual review of all Use Permits, and they would become aware through the review process if the equipment were removed and the City had not been initially notified.

In response to a question from Commissioner Fasola, **Mr. Simons** stated that the equipment would be electric rather than gas powered. He said that it would consist of a small oxygen generator that would use a compressor to push air down to the wells.

Commissioner Fasola commented that it would seem the equipment could be located further to the east to allow for a tree to be planted at the site. He indicated that it may have to run for a longer period of time, but it would be a solution to potential concerns for it to be moved further to the east. He commented that it possibly could be placed in one of the surplus compact

spaces or the adjacent planter area. He indicated that he knows that the amount of noise decreases exponentially with distance.

Mr. Simons stated that the proposed location for the equipment would be more preferable for its operation and maintenance.

Mr. Harrigian pointed out that the compressor for the equipment does not run continually. He said that it could possibly be put on a timer to shut down during nighttime hours. He said that moving the system to the east also would make it more visible to the main customer traffic visiting the site. He said that moving the unit to the east would not significantly decrease the amount of noise; would make its operation less efficient; and would result in it being more visible to customers. He pointed out that the signage facing to the west has been removed from the building, which was originally the concern rather than the signage facing to the north.

Chairman Lesser opened the public hearing.

There being no one wishing to speak regarding the issue, Chairman Lesser closed the public hearing.

Discussion

Commissioner Seville-Jones indicated that she would like for a larger permanent tree to be included in the future, and she would want any equipment on the site to be landscaped in the interim to help provide a buffer to the adjacent neighbors. She said that the accessibility of the parking spaces is slightly more awkward with the revised plan. She indicated, however, that the Traffic Engineer feels the plan is acceptable, and having the compact spaces further away from the main building is a benefit. She thanked the applicant and their consultant for explaining the oxygenation unit which has helped to provide a clearer understanding of what would be required. She said that she does not have an objection to the equipment provided that there is a condition in the Use Permit which specifies that only an oxygenation unit is permitted; that it be shrouded and encased in foam and surrounded by trees; and that the maximum amount of noise remediation possible be utilized. She said that she is satisfied that the equipment be placed as proposed because it would only be on the site for a limited period of time; because there would be disadvantages to moving it to the east as described by the applicant, and because the noise would be contained. She stated that the Use Permit come back before the Commission if Shell determines that additional equipment other than an oxygenation unit is required.

Commissioner Powell commented that the project is going to be one of the first LEED certified buildings in the City, and is important to encourage more such structures. He said that the site does create a hardship because of the severe slope. He also commended the residents who have raised concerns that have been taken into consideration. He said that he supports the Variance for the height and the Use Permit.

Commissioner Fasola indicated that he supports the project. He suggested placing the equipment in one of the surplus compact spaces or in the planter area to allow for a tree to be planted. He stated that he does not have an objection to the remediation equipment provided that it meets Code requirements for noise and cannot be heard by the neighboring residents. He commented that he feels the previous plan for parking was preferable to the current proposal. He said that it would not be a large distance to park and walk to the building from the standard size parking spaces as originally designed. He indicated that the Variance request for the additional height is not related to the LEED certification, and he has a concern of setting a precedent with the parapet and towers being taller than the Code allows. He commented that

he could support the Variance request if it were only to allow additional height above the maximum permitted for the tower elements and not the parapet.

Commissioner Paralusz said that she also supports the project and commends the developer in addressing the concerns of the neighbors and Commissioners. She indicated that she is concerned with placing the remediation equipment at the western corner of the property, and it still is unknown whether it would generate a large amount of noise or if the mitigation measures would be successful. She commented that she would prefer that the equipment be moved closer to Sepulveda Boulevard. She stated that she supports the recommendation that the landscaping around the remediation unit be put in immediately which would help alleviate her concern with the location of the equipment. She indicated that she is satisfied with the recommendations of the Traffic Engineer regarding the parking and supports the changes.

In response to a question from Chairman Lesser, Director Thompson said that staff feels the concerns regarding the proposed location of the remediation equipment have been properly addressed. He indicated that a condition can be drafted to address issues regarding the noise and location of the equipment. He said that staff would support the equipment being placed in one of the surplus parking spaces which would provide motivation for it to be removed as soon as possible in order to provide an additional parking space.

Chairman Lesser stated that he also supports the project and commended the applicant on designing the first LEED certified building at the gateway to the City. He commented that the project also is less dense than the maximum that would be permitted on the site. He stated that it would not appear substantially higher than the surrounding buildings in the area even though it would exceed the City's height requirements. He said that he can make the findings for the Variance request based on the topography of the site. He commented that he supports the parking plan as presented. He said that he would support the comment of Commissioner Seville-Jones that the project be required to come back before the Commission if any additional equipment other than the oxygenation unit is determined to be necessary.

Commissioner Fasola commented that he will vote to approve the project but does have concerns regarding granting the height Variance.

Action

A motion was MADE and SECONDED (Seville-Jones/Powell) to **APPROVE** a Use Permit and Variance for Construction of Two Commercial Buildings Located at the Northwest Corner of Sepulveda and Manhattan Beach Boulevards with the additional condition drafted by staff to address the issues regarding the oxygenation unit including shielding from the neighborhood; that the landscaping plan including planting of a 36-inch box tree be implemented at the time the site is occupied; and that the equipment for the oxygenation unit be placed within a surplus parking space.

AYES: Fasola, Paralusz, Powell, Seville-Jones and Chair Lesser
NOES: None.
ABSENT: None.
ABSTAIN: None.

Director Thompson explained the 15-day appeal period and said that the item will be placed on the City Council's Consent Calendar for their meeting of October 7, 2008.

E. PUBLIC HEARINGS (NEW)

1. Consideration of a Use Permit for an Expansion at 1826-1832 Manhattan Beach Boulevard of an Existing School (Manhattan Academy) Located at 1740 and 1808 Manhattan Beach Boulevard

Assistant Planner Ochoa summarized the staff report. She provided the Commissioners with three additional letters that staff received after the staff report was prepared. She indicated that the proposal is to expand an existing use of a private school at 1740 and 1808 Manhattan Beach Boulevard with a new site at 1826-1832 Manhattan Beach Boulevard. She stated that the Use Permit would allow the change of use from an existing auto repair, glass store, drycleaners and computer service to a school use. She indicated that the proposal is to retain the existing building of the main school at 1740 Manhattan Beach Boulevard and to increase the total number of students from 145 to 155 and the number of teachers from 6 to 9 at that site. She indicated that the proposal is also to convert an existing parking lot to a play area and offer a middle school program at 1808 Manhattan Beach Boulevard. She stated that they are also proposing to convert existing buildings into classrooms and convert a portion of the existing parking lot to a play area at 1826 Manhattan Beach Boulevard. She indicated that the proposal is to combine all three sites into one Use Permit with 1740 Manhattan Beach Boulevard as the main site and the other two properties as satellite sites.

Assistant Planner Ochoa indicated that the existing play area is proposed to increase from 5,600 to 11,995 square feet. She indicated that there currently are 20 parking spaces which is proposed to decrease to 17. She stated that the total number of employees is proposed to increase from 12 to 19 and the total number of students is proposed to increase from 194 to 300. She commented that notice was mailed to property owners within 500 feet and published in the Beach Reporter. She said that staff received three letters and one phone call with concerns regarding parking and traffic circulation. She indicated that there was a recommendation by the Police Department that signage be posted at all loading zones for enforcement and a requirement by the Public Works Department that a trash enclosure be provided for the new site at 1826 Manhattan Beach Blvd. She indicated that staff recommends a total of 23 parking spaces, 19 parking spaces, one for each employee and four visitor spaces, one space for every 4 classrooms.

She said the applicant is proposing to restrict the existing parking meters at 1826-1832 Manhattan Beach Blvd. during peak times and un-restrict them at all other times. She stated that staff is in support of this. She also stated that staff would recommend limiting the maximum number of employees for all three sites in order to reduce the parking demand.

In response to a question from Commissioner Powell, Traffic Engineer Zandvliet said that the parking demand will increase because of the additional number of employees to service the new classrooms and students. He commented that the parking requirement has been considered separately from the loading and unloading conditions.

Cheryl Vargo, representing the applicant, said that the school currently consists of three campuses. She commented that there is also a campus for toddlers located at 1544 Manhattan Beach Boulevard which is not involved as part of the subject proposal. She indicated that the main campus at 1740 Manhattan Beach Boulevard includes a preschool and elementary school, and the proposal is to add three teachers and ten children at that site. She indicated that the campus at 1808 Manhattan Beach Boulevard has four classrooms with 49 children and four teachers. She indicated that the properties at 1740 and 1808 Manhattan Beach Boulevard currently have separate Conditional Use Permits. She indicated that the new facility at 1826 Manhattan Beach Boulevard is proposed as an elementary and middle school with four classrooms and four teachers. She commented that no new buildings are proposed for the site at 1826 Manhattan Beach Boulevard; however, the existing structures will be significantly

renovated. She said that they feel 17 parking spaces would be more than adequate to serve the facility because they have a very successful ride share program and incentives. She indicated that currently three of the teachers take the bus, two ride bicycles, four rideshare, one is dropped off, and two drive independently. She said that currently 5 of the 12 spaces provided for employees are being utilized at 1740 Manhattan Beach Boulevard, and the spaces at 1808 Manhattan Beach Boulevard are not used because there is no need. She stated that there is a great need for an additional outdoor play area. She indicated that there are incentives for the teachers to rideshare, and the Traffic Engineer has recommended that an annual report be submitted to the Community Development Department in order to demonstrate how the program is working.

Ms. Vargo said that currently there is 100 feet of curb in front of 1740 Manhattan Beach Boulevard that is utilized for loading and unloading. She indicated that they would like for signs to be posted to provide for loading and unloading between 7:30 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. She commented that the loading area could be utilized for parking during other hours of the day, although they felt it may be better for it to be designated as only a loading zone. She said that they would like for signage to designate the area in front of 1808 Manhattan Beach Boulevard for loading and unloading during peak hours and to allow public parking during other hours. She commented that there are currently four meters in front of 1826 Manhattan Beach Boulevard which they are proposing be restricted to loading and unloading during peak hours. She indicated that they do not feel the businesses in the area are competing for street parking during the peak hours of the school. She said that they are requesting that a cap not be placed on the number of employees. She indicated that any change in the requirements by the Department of Social Services for the preschool would impact the number of teachers that they would need. She suggested that a condition could possibly be placed in the Use Permit that they would need to come back before the Commission if they did not meet the goals of the ride share program and parking becomes a concern. She commented that the loading and unloading zones work very well, as the hours for classes of the different age groups are staggered. She said that they would not want to be required to install a trash enclosure at 1826 Manhattan Beach Boulevard and are proposing to use the existing trash enclosure at 1808 Manhattan Beach Boulevard for both properties. She commented that the trash could be carried to the existing enclosure from 1826 Manhattan Beach Boulevard. She said that the existing trash enclosure is very large and has requirements. She commented that there is a great need to expand the school and provide additional outdoor space at 1808 Manhattan Beach Boulevard, which is the reason they acquired the additional property. She pointed out that the school will have a business license that will generate some revenue for the City, and the need for the school to expand outweighs the need for the replacement of the existing retail uses. She commented that the site is not large enough to redevelop as retail given the current requirements for parking, the amount of space needed for a retail use, and its location in the middle of the block.

Chairman Lesser opened the public hearing.

Audience Participation

Marsha Marr, representing the applicant, said that the school currently consists of three buildings, and the existing building located near to Pollywog Park is not associated with the proposal. She indicated that the building at 1740 Manhattan Beach Boulevard operates between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. She indicated that parents may drop off their children at any time between 7:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m., and most arrive after 8:00 a.m. She indicated that they offer curbside service between 8:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. where teachers meet students at their cars at the loading zone and escort them into the school. She indicated that the students arrive between 7:30 a.m. and 8:10 a.m. at the elementary campus at 1808 Manhattan Beach

Boulevard. She said that the elementary campus is small and has little impact to the morning traffic flow on the boulevard. She commented that some of the preschool children leave the main building at noon. She said that the afternoon pick-up hours are between 2:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. She commented that staff has observed and praised the school for the smoothness of their afternoon dismissal procedure at the main campus at 1740 Manhattan Beach Boulevard. She said that each parent that arrives at the loading zone has a bright placard with their child's name and classroom number which is easily visible to the teacher at the curb. She indicated that the teacher then calls with a walkie-talkie for the student to be brought out of the building. She said that the children are waiting in the lobby during the pick up time which reduces the time that each car is stopped to load their child. She stated that there is never a time period where there are an abundance of children leaving at the same time. She said that there are staggered dismissal times for the classes at the main building. She commented that 50 percent of the students at the elementary campus stay for extended hours to use their homework club. She stated that the children who do leave at 3:15 p.m. are stationed at the front steps ten minutes early and are escorted to the appropriate car.

Ms. Marr said that they have been told that the students at the new building at 1826 Manhattan Beach Boulevard would need to be dropped off and picked up at 1808 Manhattan Beach Boulevard. She stated that dropping the students off at 1808 Manhattan Beach Boulevard would require them to walk across the driveways for Tomboy's which would be dangerous and result in parents waiting longer at the drop off area to make certain their child makes it to the building safely. She indicated that they are requesting to instead use the same procedures at the new campus that they currently use for the other two buildings.

Marisa Levy said that she is working with Manhattan Academy and the City to incorporate green alternative building practices at their new site, and their goal is for the new structure to be LEED certified. She indicated that environmentally friendly measures they plan to include are updating the roofing material to be highly reflective; replacing all of the lighting fixtures and bulbs; adding ceiling insulation to decrease energy output; updating the heating and electrical systems to decrease energy output; replacing the windows; incorporating new plumbing fixtures to reduce water use; using turf for part of the site rather than lawn to reduce water use; using paint and carpet that are certified to not emit volatile organic compounds; and reducing waste through recycling and composting. She commented that using environmental friendly practices is a good method of teaching children about the environment and measures to help protect it.

Commissioner Powell commented that the City's annual arts festival is on Sunday, September 14, 2008, from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. with a theme of environmentally friendly practices. He commented that it is on Manhattan Beach Boulevard from Highland Avenue to Valley Ardmore.

Alisha Crew, a student of the Academy's middle school, said that the gymnasium at the school is very hot and small which results in more frequent injuries to the students and insufficient space to allow for any team sports. She commented that the students become so hot in the gym that recess and exercising are not enjoyable. She pointed out that fresh air, sunlight and exercise are very important for growth and health. She said that team sports can only be played outdoors. She commented that not all of the students have a large yard at home where they can play outdoors and would benefit very much from a larger outdoor play area at school.

Kevin Lee, a resident of the 1700 block of 11th Street, said that he supports the school but has concerns regarding the amount of parking provided with the new proposal. He indicated that staff and parents have parked on 11th Street over the past couple of years. He said that he has a concern that the plans reduce the amount parking while expanding the school. He commented

that there have been occasions where cars have parked extending into his driveway. He pointed out that parents also assist in the classrooms in addition to the staff, and there are occasions when the parents park on the surrounding streets to visit the school.

Jennifer Decosta-Coslo said that no resident is immune to the problem of parking in the City, which can be very frustrating. She pointed out that Manhattan Academy is one of seven schools in the area, and the parents who parking on the adjacent streets are most likely visiting one of the other schools. She commented that the curb side check-in is very efficient in regulating the traffic flow in and out of the loading zone. She commented that she lives in Playa del Rey and was lucky to find Manhattan Academy. She indicated that the school is setting a very good example with its rideshare program. She indicated that there is also an incentive for the teachers and staff to take public transportation to the school. She indicated that the school is filling the need for early childhood education in the community, and they have a great need for additional space for classrooms and open play area.

Heather McCall said that the school supports their employees carpooling and using public transportation. She commented that she is a teacher at the school and rides her bike to work. She said that there is a desperate need for additional outdoor area at the school. She said that the teachers currently must walk the children to the park or other outdoor areas to play. She indicated that the proposal would provide an outdoor play area on site and would prevent the need to walk the children down the busy boulevard.

Melanie Patterson said that she highly values the school as a parent of one of the students. She said that the expansion of the school is long overdue, and additional outdoor space would allow the children to have much more physical activity. She pointed out that most of the City's residents chose to live in the area because of the great weather.

Julie Caru said that there is a need and demand for private schools in the area, and there are not many options in the community. She commented that there is an issue of traffic on 11th Street during the afternoon hours when parents are picking up their children; however, it is not a result of the parents from Manhattan Academy. She pointed out that one of the rules of a Montessori school is that the parents must leave their children and not visit the classrooms, and the majority of the parents use the curbside check-in procedure.

Dalia Wheeler indicated that she and her husband are not residents of Manhattan Beach, and they came to the school in order to provide a better education to challenge their children. She said that they do shop in Manhattan Beach although they are not residents because their children are at the school and her husband works in the City.

Chairman Lesser closed the public hearing.

Discussion

Commissioner Paralusz said that she generally supports the proposal; however, she has concerns regarding the parking. She indicated that the proposal is to increase the number of students and staff by 50 percent, and she wonders if the parking should correlate. She said that she realizes that there is an incentive for ride sharing, but she has concerns regarding its effectiveness in the future particularly if no cap is placed on the number of staff. She asked if staff feels there is sufficient parking as proposed.

Traffic Engineer Zandvliet said that he also had concerns regarding the parking. He indicated that he would be comfortable with 23 parking spaces being provided to allow one space for each employee and four for visitors. He indicated that he suggested placing the cap on the number

of employees. He said that there are different requirements for the number of teachers for each class according to the age group. He said that he has a concern with reducing the number of parking spaces below 23, and the proposal is for 17 to be provided. He stated that the school's rideshare incentive program would be in place that would be periodically reviewed by the City. He indicated that the Use Permit would be brought back before the Commission if it is determined that the applicant is not in compliance with the rideshare program. He said that there is not a guarantee that the success of the current rideshare plan would remain the same in the future. He said that it should be imperative that the employees park on site and not in the surrounding residential or commercial street parking spaces. He said that it cannot be guaranteed that the street spaces would always be available because of future traffic demands or the need for additional turn lanes. He stated that the City does traditionally allow for loading zones in front of public schools. He indicated that the proposal is for loading during certain hours and to allow for parking during other hours for the neighboring commercial businesses or visitors to the school.

In response to a question from Commissioner Paralusz, Traffic Engineer Zandvliet said that signage could be placed to identify the loading zone at the request of the school or an administrative decision of the City without going through the Use Permit process. He said that including it as a condition or requirement of the CUP ensures that signage will be provided.

In response to a question from Commissioner Seville-Jones, Traffic Engineer Zandvliet said that there are currently loading zones in front of the buildings at 1740 and 1808 Manhattan Beach Boulevard. He indicated that he has not had an opportunity to study the request for the proposed loading zone in front of 1826 Manhattan Beach Boulevard.

Commissioner Seville-Jones commented that she has a question regarding the determination of the maximum number of employees, as some teachers may visit the school for only a short time to supplement classrooms.

Traffic Engineer Zandvliet said that employees would count as anyone who is paid whether part time or full time. He indicated that volunteers would not count as employees. He indicated that the site is very constrained, and any space that is allocated for parking results in a reduction in the amount of open space. He commented that the required amount of open space for the school is regulated by Social Services, which determines the total number of students that they are able to accommodate. He indicated that limiting the number of employees would limit the number of children within certain grade levels. He said that he does not feel parking structures would be a reasonable alternative for providing parking because the sites are very small and the ramps would require a great deal of space. He stated that rooftop open space would require raising the height of the building to create fencing. He indicated that the only alternative option would be to provide for an off-site parking area.

Commissioner Fasola indicated that it would be difficult to regulate and limit the number of employees, as there are also volunteers.

In response to a question from Commissioner Fasola, Traffic Engineer Zandvliet indicated that there is not a parking requirement in the Code for schools in the City, and it is determined for the individual CUP and the Community Development Director.

In response to a question from Commissioner Powell, Traffic Engineer Zandvliet said that the Parking Generation Handbook by the Institute of Transportation Engineers recommends one parking space per classroom with some additional parking for visitors, and his recommendation for the subject proposal is in the same range. He indicated that the City's public schools provide about 40 parking spaces for 300 students. He said that the state architect controls the

amount of parking for public schools, and the City has no jurisdiction.

In response to a comment from Chairman Lesser, Traffic Engineer Zandvliet said that the recommended number of parking spaces is the minimum number for the daily operation of the school. He said that parking for any special events, sporting events, or social activities would spill out into the adjacent streets.

Chairman Lesser said that he supports the school but would like to determine further study that would be helpful to the Commission in considering the project. He indicated that he would like more information regarding the impact to traffic on Manhattan Beach Boulevard during the morning and afternoon rush hour periods. He said that he also would like further information regarding whether 23 parking spaces would be appropriate and regarding the requirement of the state architect for public schools. He said that he would also like further study on the potential impact to ancillary streets of 11th Street and Harkness Street, particularly in conjunction with the other nearby schools. He said that he also would want more information as to whether 180 feet in length is sufficient for a loading zone, particularly with the proposed increase in students. He commented that he has a concern that cars queuing in the loading zone could become an issue notwithstanding the staggered times of the classes.

Commissioner Powell said that he also would like additional information regarding potential traffic impacts on the side streets.

Commissioner Seville-Jones asked about the possibility of providing crosswalks on Harkness Street or signs to provide additional safety for any pedestrian traffic between the three campuses.

Traffic Engineer Zandvliet said that a study has not been done for Harkness Street. He indicated that signs and high visibility warnings have been added on Manhattan Beach Boulevard.

In response to a question from Commissioner Fasola, Traffic Engineer Zandvliet stated that there probably is not a large number of students who live within walking distance to the school.

Commissioner Paralusz commended the applicant on their operation and said that she generally supports the project. She indicated, however, that she has concerns regarding the parking and the request by the school to have no cap on employees. She said that she would also like additional information regarding the safety of the proposed loading zone with regard to crossing the driveway for Tomboy's. She said that she would like further information regarding the requirement for a trash enclosure. She commented that one or two letters were received in opposition to waiving the requirement for a trash enclosure for 1826 Manhattan Beach Boulevard. She asked about the feasibility of moving trash across the Tomboy's parking lot from one site to another. She said that it is important to balance the needs for parking with the need for open space. She commented that she is not as concerned with a decrease in revenue with the loss of retail, as parents of the students utilize other businesses in the area.

Commissioner Seville-Jones commended the students of the school for their community involvement. She said that she is generally in support of increased open space; however, there is a problem with the size of the expansion in relation to the number of parking spaces. She said that she does not feel she will be convinced that the amount of parking is acceptable given the size of the expansion that is proposed. She said that there needs to be consideration for either limiting the number of students or increasing the amount of parking. She said that she would be more in favor of limiting the number of students or classrooms rather than the number of employees. She commented that she is generally in favor of the loading zone as proposed,

although it is possible that further study could raise concerns. She indicated that she also would like more information regarding the requirement for an additional trash enclosure and the amount of trash that would be generated at the new building. She commented that she does recognize that it can be difficult to integrate a trash enclosure into a building design and that there may be a need to consolidate it at one site.

Commissioner Powell said that he agrees with the comments of the other Commissioners. He also commended the school and recognizes the need for more open space. He said that he is not certain if it would be more appropriate to limit the number of students or employees. He suggested the possibility of providing a separate parking or drop off area and shuttling the students and employees to the school. He commented that there is no guarantee that the current rideshare program will continue to be as successful in the future, and the Commission must take into consideration the future use of the site. He indicated that having a separate drop off point may help in alleviating the concerns regarding parking and the safety of children being dropped off and picked up along a busy street.

Commissioner Fasola indicated that he supports the expansion of the school; however, he also has concerns with the parking as proposed. He said that a 50 percent increase in the number of students would require at least 50 percent more parking. He commented that he would like more information regarding the state architect's parking requirements for public schools. He indicated that he is not concerned with the loading zone as proposed. He asked whether it would be fair to allow the school to take their trash across Tomboy's. He said it would be appropriate for staff to require a trash enclosure. He said that he would not support capping the number of employees and would want requirements that are much easier to enforce.

Chairman Lesser indicated that he supports the expansion of the school and that there is a real need for additional open space. He stated, however, that the Commission needs to be concerned with the parking and traffic as it impacts the entire community. He said that he would like to see alternative proposals for a smaller school. He stated that he also has concerns with limiting the number of employees, as the requirements of Social Services for the number of staff members in relation to the number of children may change. He stated that the number of students determines the total number of trips and parking requirements for the site. He commented that he would like further study to be done regarding the trash enclosure. He said that he also would like further information regarding the loading area as well as parking requirements.

Director Thompson summarized that the Commission has concerns and would like further information regarding the number of students; regarding the parking demand and if there are other opportunities on the properties to provide parking; and regarding the loading area and its relation to Tomboy's.

Chairman Lesser reopened the public hearing.

Ms. Vargo pointed out that it does not seem that the Commission has given credit to the effectiveness of the ride share program that the school has in place and the fact that the existing parking spaces are not fully utilized.

Chairman Lesser commented that the Commission is seeking further analysis from the Traffic Engineer regarding whether the parking as proposed is appropriate.

Commissioner Paralusz indicated that the ride share program is one of the factors that the Traffic Engineer will take into account in considering the parking. She said that while the ride share program is currently very successful, the Commission also needs to take the future use of

the site into consideration if there is a growth or turnover in staff.

Ms. Marr pointed out that there are many students who do walk to the school. She stated that they have moved their larger events such as their holiday program to other venues rather than impact the neighbors. She commented that the trash is moved at 8:00 at night after the peak hours for Tomboy's. She also pointed out that they do composting of much of the trash from the school.

Chairman Lesser closed the public hearing.

Action

Chairman Lesser moved to **CONTINUE** a Use Permit for an Expansion at 1826-1832 Manhattan Beach Boulevard of an Existing School (Manhattan Academy) Located at 1740 and 1808 Manhattan Beach Boulevard to October 22, 2008.

At 9:30 a 10 minute recess was taken.

F. BUSINESS ITEMS

Amendment to the Planning Commission's Decision Approving a Driveway Vehicular Turntable for a New Duplex at 729 Manhattan Beach Boulevard

Commissioner Fasola indicated that he was the architect for the driveway turntable at the home next door to the subject property and submitted a proposal to the applicants for construction of the subject project. He indicated that he is recusing himself from consideration of the issue to avoid any potential conflict of interest.

Assistant Planner Danna summarized the staff report. He indicated that the turntable is proposed in order to comply with Manhattan Beach Code Section 10.64.130A which prohibits backing out across a property line at Manhattan Beach Boulevard. He indicated that the Commission previously determined that one turntable serving two residences would be appropriate for the subject applicants. He stated that the plans submitted by the applicants for the August 22 and October 24, 2007 meetings showed a 20 foot turntable, and the current site plan submitted for the building permit show the turntable with a 14 foot diameter. He indicated that the applicant is proposing a non permanent 15'4" diameter turntable with a turning surface of 13'4". He said that staff's concern is that the turning surface is insufficient for turning larger vehicles and that it is a non permanent structure that can be easily moved or relocated. He said that staff's rationale for requiring a 20 foot permanent structure is to accommodate larger vehicles and to prevent the turntable from being removed or relocated to the side. He indicated that the Traffic Engineer has concluded that a 13'4" diameter turning surface is insufficient to effectively serve the residential parking needs for the project and recommends that the turntable be at least 18 feet in diameter. He stated that staff supports the recommendations of the Traffic Engineer. He said that staff requests that the Commission review the proposal and provide direction.

In response to a question from Chairman Lesser, Traffic Engineer Zandvliet said that his concern is access into the driveway and the maneuverability of cars onto the turntable coming from a higher speed on a busy street. He said that drivers backing onto the turntable from the garage may also have difficulty maneuvering onto it from different angles. He said that the smaller diameter limits the ability to maneuver onto the turntable. He said that larger turntables are available at similar pricing and would not be a hardship.

In response to a question from Chairman Lesser, Traffic Engineer Zandvliet said that Code Section 10.64.130A is similar to codes in other cities that restrict backing out onto major arterial streets. He commented that most properties have a sufficiently wide area to provide for a circular driveway with sufficient turning radius for cars to turn and pull out forward onto the street. He indicated that the subject site is very confined, and a turntable is a practical solution.

In response to a question from Commissioner Lesser, Traffic Engineer Zandvliet indicated that the diameter of the turntable for the property adjacent to the subject site is 19 or 20 feet.

In response to a question from Commissioner Paralusz, Traffic Engineer Zandvliet indicated that the turntable on the property adjacent to the subject site is built into the ground and would be considered permanent. He indicated that he would not object to the turntable being permanent or not permanent provided that it has a diameter of at least 18 feet. He pointed out that the condition of approval would be invalidated if it were removed.

In response to a question from Commissioner Seville-Jones, Traffic Engineer Zandvliet said that he does not believe that two cars can be on a 20 foot diameter turntable at the same time.

Director Thompson commented that two cars can fit at one time on a 20 foot turntable, but it is not practical for use with two cars.

Chris Steinbacker, the applicant, said that they were surprised that the issue came back before the Commission as a modification. He said that the first plans that were submitted to the Commissioners were conceptual, and their understanding was that they were seeking approval for the general concept of a turntable. He said that they were not sure of the manufacturer or of the dimensions when they submitted the plans over a year ago, and they were asked by the Commission to provide further information. He stated that they then submitted additional information for the meeting of October from the manufacturer CarTurner that showed the dimensions for the smaller turntable. He said that they were not aware that they needed additional approval after they submitted the plans back to staff for review.

Tim Harvey, the applicant, said that the plans submitted as of August 2008 clearly specify the dimensions of the turntable with a 14 foot diameter. He said that the original plans did not include the specific scale of the turntable. He indicated that the Planning Commission at the August 22, 2007, meeting indicated that the plans were conceptual. He said that the plans that were originally submitted did not include dimensions.

Mr. Steinbacker indicated that there were many changes to the plans since they were originally submitted. He commented that the 20' diameter turntable for the driveway at the home next to their property is specifically designed for two cars, and the turntable they are proposing is intended for use by one car at a time. He indicated that it is currently very dangerous to back out of their driveway onto Manhattan Beach Boulevard. He pointed out that they would not propose a turntable if they did not intend for it to be used. He commented that the turntable they are proposing is a fairly standard size, and they believe they have selected the best manufacturer. He said that the turntable they are proposing would be easier and less expensive to fix than one that is larger and built permanently into the driveway. He said that one of the conditions of approval is that the turntable remain in working order.

Mr. Harvey pointed out that they would not be able to remove the turntable, as one of the conditions of approval is that the turntable remain in place and in working order. He commented that they would not incur the cost of installing the turntable and then remove it.

Mr. Steinbacker said that 15 feet of the center wall of the garage has been removed in the design in order to accommodate the turntable.

Mr. Harvey indicated that their intent is not to pull onto the turntable from Manhattan Beach Boulevard and then spin the car to back into the garage, but rather to back from the garage onto the turntable and then spin the car to face Manhattan Beach Boulevard. He indicated that there is not an issue with maneuvering onto the turntable from Manhattan Beach Boulevard. He indicated that having only one garage door and no interior wall will allow the cars to maneuver onto the turntable from the garage. He commented that they have provided staff with a DVD that demonstrates the use of the turntable. He said that they have reviewed the turntables offered by the other manufacturers identified by the Traffic Engineer. He indicated that CarTurn only makes a 12' or 14' diameter turntable; CarSpin manufacturers a 13', 15', and 19' diameter turntable; and Hovair manufactures a 14 and 16' diameter turntable. He commented that Hovair will custom build an 18' diameter turntable for \$50,000.00, which is a significant increase in cost. He commented that a 19' turntable is meant to accommodate two vehicles, which the Commission previously indicated at the October 24 meeting that they would not support. He commented that a diameter between 12' and 16' is an industry standard size.

Commissioner Seville-Jones said that her recollection is that the turntable at the property adjacent to the subject site does turn two cars at one time. She indicated that she recalls that **Mr. Harvey** represented previously that the subject turntable would hold two cars even though the intent was to only turn one car at a time. She said that the design of the turntable as now proposed is to only hold one car which has changed from the previous meeting. She said that the Commission previously required that the turntable be sufficient to accommodate two vehicles because it would be accommodating two properties.

Mr. Steinbacker commented that the turntable as proposed would only turn one vehicle at a time.

In response to a question from Commissioner Seville-Jones, **Mr. Harvey** said that the above-ground turntable could possibly be disassembled and moved but is not easily removable. He said that the fact that it would be above ground makes it easier to determine that the car is properly placed on the turntable before it spins as opposed to one that is flush to the ground.

Mr. Steinbacker said that the above ground turntable is much easier and less expensive to service if one of the motors breaks down than one that is built in to the driveway.

Mr. Harvey commented that a larger diameter turntable would be significantly more expensive and would not provide that much of a difference in maneuverability of the vehicles.

Commissioner Paralusz indicated that it appears that the original site plans submitted to staff in August of 2007 do indicate a diameter of 20 feet for the turntable, which was the design that was evaluated by staff.

Mr. Steinbacker commented that they corrected the plans after the original meeting, and several revisions have since been made. He indicated that they did submit information from CarTurner after further information was requested by the Commission at the August meeting.

Bill Schwanker, representing CarTurner, said that he decided to design a better turntable after he found that constructing a built-in model would cost up to \$60,000.00. He said that their turntable is cost effective because no foundation work is required. He stated that their design is made of a non skid stainless steel that will not rust or peel off, and the galvanized surface of other turntables will begin to rust if they are scratched. He indicated that their turntables are

designed so that all of the parts can be removed and fixed. He said that the motors are very easy and inexpensive to replace, and they include several additional motors for redundancy so that if one is broken the turntable will still operate. He commented that their product can be kept running for longer than a built in turntable and will never rust or corrode.

In response to a question from Chairman Lesser, **Mr. Schwanker** indicated that a larger diameter provides the illusion of more space for vehicles to maneuver; however, there must also be additional space around the turntable. He said that a vehicle must be centered on a turntable in order for the car not to hit any surrounding structures. He said that their turntable is designed not to operate unless the car is properly placed. He pointed out that the location of the turntable can be adjusted in order to suit the individual property, which is not possible with a built-in model.

Chairman Lesser opened the public hearing.

There being no one wishing to speak regarding the issue, Chairman Lesser closed the public hearing.

Discussion

Traffic Engineer Zandvliet stated that all three manufacturers that he found on the internet would custom build an 18' or larger diameter turntable. He indicated that the location of an 18' diameter turntable would not have to be adjusted because it would be easier for a car to be positioned properly. He commented that he would have the same concerns for a car backing out of a garage onto a smaller turntable as he would for a car pulling from Manhattan Beach Boulevard onto it. He indicated that the dimensions on the plans indicate that the garage door would be 18 feet, and there would be limited maneuverability for cars entering and exiting the garage.

Director Thompson said that staff has less concern with allowing an above-ground turntable after listening to the testimony of the applicants and their representative. He said that he is convinced that the design is clearly intended to remain in a single location and not be moved. He said that he would still support the recommendation of the Traffic Engineer for at least an 18' radius.

Commissioner Powell stated that he originally supported the project. He said that the safety of traffic on Manhattan Beach Boulevard must be balanced with the safety of entering the driveway for the project. He said that he must rely on the opinion of the City's Traffic Engineer. He said that he does not have a concern with a turntable that is removable. He commented that he originally requested the condition that the turntable remain operable at all times, as cars would need to back out onto Manhattan Beach Boulevard from the driveway if it were not in operation. He commented that there may be occasions when someone pulls into the driveway and then realizes that the garage spaces are occupied which would then necessitate them backing onto Manhattan Beach Boulevard. He said that the Traffic Engineer has also indicated that the maneuverability of cars backing out of the garage onto the turntable is a concern with the dimensions as proposed. He said that he would support a minimum diameter of 18 feet for the turntable.

Commissioner Seville-Jones indicated that she agrees with the comments of Commissioner Powell. She indicated that there was an accommodation to the applicants in allowing the joint garage with which staff originally had some concerns. She said that it appears clear that staff was considering a turntable with a 20' diameter. She said that although there may have been an honest disagreement, but it does not appear that the applicant understands that staff approaches

problems in good faith. She said that she would support the opinion of the Traffic Engineer that the diameter of the turntable should be at least 18 feet, although she would prefer that the diameter be 20 feet because she is not certain that two cars would be able to fit on one that is smaller. She pointed out that the structure will be on the site beyond the time that it will be occupied by the applicants, and the Commission must also take the future use of the property into consideration in their decision. She said that staff has agreed that they do not have an objection to the removable structure.

Commissioner Paralusz said that she did not originally consider the project; however, she is in agreement with the comments of the prior Commissioners. She said that although the intention of the applicants may be to only use the turntable when exiting the garage, the property will still exist whether or not they occupy the site. She said that she does not have a concern with the turntable being removable. She said that she is persuaded by the Traffic Engineer that there does appear to be a limited amount of space on the turntable. She indicated that she does not feel that it has been sufficiently demonstrated that it would be safe considering the speed and volume of traffic along Manhattan Beach Boulevard. She said that she also would support requiring an 18' diameter turntable.

Chairman Lesser indicated that he also agrees with the comments of the other Commissioners. He commented that the tone of the letter submitted by the applicants appears to be opposing staff rather than working with them. He said that in this case there are legitimate safety concerns identified by the Traffic Engineer. He commented that his original understanding was that the turntable provided by the applicants would be the same as the turntable at the neighboring property with a diameter of 20 feet which would satisfy the concern of the Traffic Engineer regarding safety.

A motion was MADE and SECONDED (Seville-Jones/Paralusz) to **APPROVE** an 18 foot diameter turntable for the residence located at 729 Manhattan Beach Boulevard

AYES: Paralusz, Powell, Seville-Jones and Chair Lesser
NOES: None.
ABSENT: None.
ABSTAIN: Fasola

Director Thompson explained the 15-day appeal period and will be placed on the City Council's Consent Calendar for their meeting of October 7, 2008.

G. DIRECTORS ITEMS

Director Thompson indicated that the ethics training is scheduled at the Police Fire Facility on September 11, 2008. He indicated that the American Planning Association Conference is scheduled from September 21-24 in West Hollywood.

H. PLANNING COMMISSION ITEMS

Commissioner Powell commented that the City's annual arts festival is on Sunday, September 14, 2008, from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

I. TENTATIVE AGENDA

1. Sign Exception/Manhattan Beach Studios/1600 Rosecrans Avenue
2. Master Use Permit Amendments/Manhattan Village Shopping Center/3500 Sepulveda

Boulevard

J. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:45 p.m. to Wednesday, September 24, 2008. in the City Council Chambers, City Hall, 1400 Highland Avenue

SARAH BOESCHEN
Recording Secretary

ATTEST:

RICHARD THOMPSON
Community Development Director