

April 14, 2020

El Paso County Development Services Department
Attn: Nina Ruiz, Project Manager / Planner II
2880 International Circle
Colorado Springs, CO 80910

**SUBJECT: Monument Academy – New Middle / High School
Site Development Plan Submittal – Letter of Intent**

Dear Nina:

In accordance with the El Paso County Land Development Code, please accept this "Letter of Intent" for the attached Site Development Plan submittal. Monument Academy (MA) is proposing to construct a new school campus on an unplatted 42.3-acre parcel (EPC Parcel No. 61000-00-533) at the southeast corner of State Highway 83 (SH83) and Walker Road. The proposed Site Development Plan application requests approval for phased construction of the new school campus.

Contact information for the Property Owner is as follows:

Monument Academy Foundation
1150 Village Ridge Point
Monument, CO 80132
Attn: Mark McWilliams (719-481-1950; markmcwilliams5@gmail.com)

Walden Corporation
17145 Colonial Park Drive
Monument, CO 80132
Attn: Matt Dunston (719-339-2410; mattdunston@hotmail.com)

Proposed School Campus:

Monument Academy, a Colorado Charter School authorized by the Lewis-Palmer School District No. 38, desires to construct a new middle/high school serving grades 6-12. The school intends to open in the fall of 2020 with approximately 600 students and anticipates growing its enrollment to 1,000 students at full build out. The school, as proposed, would consist of approximately 57,500 SF built in phase one, and an additional 30,000 SF to be constructed in a future phase. The school will contain all customary program spaces such as academic spaces, athletic and gymnasium spaces, band, vocal music, art, drama and typical support spaces such as administrative and counseling spaces. While most of these functions would be constructed in the first phase, the second phase would likely expand the athletic and performance arts spaces including a multi-purpose performance venue.

In addition to the school functions, the YMCA of the Pikes Peak Region, the largest non-profit community support organization serving El Paso County, has expressed interest in occupying approximately 12,000 SF of phase one space that would be co-located with the school. The YMCA program would potentially consist of athletic spaces such as a healthy living center, group exercise class space, personal training,

and other similar functions. As with the school, the YMCA would also require typical support spaces for administrative, child care, and other functions. As with the school, the YMCA envisions constructing their program space in phases, and phase two could include an expanded healthy living center, additional group exercise spaces, and potentially a competition aquatics venue. If all these envisioned uses are eventually constructed, future phases would total approximately 40,000 SF of additional space. Approval of the YMCA use will require a separate special use permit application through El Paso County.

Traffic Circulation:

To support these proposed uses on the site, robust on-site traffic circulation and parking facilities are proposed. Primary access to the site will be provided by a new roadway (Jane Lundeen Drive) extending south from Walker Road into the site. A Roundabout is proposed at the intersection of Walker Road and Jane Lundeen Drive, and the proposed intersection is located in the optimal location at the high point in Walker Road. An additional right-in only access is planned to extend from State Highway 83 easterly into the site. This access will extend east-west across the property, connecting with the future extension of Pinehurst Circle planned through the adjoining Walden Preserve 2 PUD southeast of the school site. Both Jane Lundeen Drive and Pinehurst Circle will be constructed to County standards with the intention of dedication as public roadways in conjunction with a future subdivision application.

Two separate parking lots will be constructed within the school site, providing dedicated access for students and faculty in one lot on the north side of the school building, while the second lot will provide drop off and loading space for students brought to school by parents. The second lot on the south side of the school building will also serve community and potential YMCA parking needs. Entrances to these parking lots will be separated by the maximum distance afforded by the site to prevent congestion during peak times. The site improvements will also ultimately include regional athletic fields and connection to a regional pedestrian and equestrian trail system.

Utilities:

The proposed school site is located within close proximity to the central water and wastewater systems owned and operated by the Walden Corporation, which currently serves Kilmer Elementary School. The easterly boundary of the school site is adjacent to the existing Walden Wastewater Treatment Facility. The Walden Corporation will work collaboratively with Monument Academy to provide the required central water and wastewater system connections and ensure that sufficient capacity is provided.

Justification:

This Site Development Plan request is justified recognizing that the proposed school campus is a logical land use for this property in proximity to existing and proposed residential areas, and the site has adequate access and utilities available. Located near the geographic center of School District 38, this property has historically been owned by the school district and planned as a future school site.

Requested Alternative Landscaping Plan:

Like most school sites, Monument Academy is proposing an Alternative Landscape Plan which deviates from some aspects of the County landscape design criteria as further described below:

1. **Section: 6.2.2.E.2.a-b. Requirement for Non-Residential Uses, Minimum required Landscape interior area and Tree Count:** Monument Academy is proposing an alternative landscape plan with a reduced interior tree count provided based on limited resources. The proposed site design will adequately meet the functional needs of the school and provide appropriate aesthetic landscaping.
2. **Section 6.2.2.C.2. Parking Lot Islands: Islands, fingers, and corners are required to be incorporated into all parking lots of 15 parking spaces or more in area. One island shall be provided for every 15 spaces.** Monument Academy is proposing an alternative landscape plan eliminating the required tree islands based on limited resources and the desire to minimize obstructions to snow plowing in the parking lot. The proposed site design will adequately meet the functional needs of the school without having tree islands with curb and gutter.
3. **Section 6.2.2.B.1; Table 6-1. The required depth of the roadway landscape area shall be increased to 15 feet along a non-arterial road or public alley where the road or alley separates a non-residential use from a residential zoning district. The number of required trees shall be increased to 1 per 15 feet of linear frontage. A minimum of 1/3 of the trees shall be evergreen trees.** Monument Academy is proposing an alternative landscape plan with a reduced total number of trees provided based on limited resources. The proposed site design will adequately meet the functional needs of the school and provide appropriate aesthetic landscaping.
4. **Section 6.2.2.C.5. Required Parking Lot Screening: 36" landscape shrubbery screen.** Monument Academy is proposing an alternative landscape plan deleting the 36" shrubbery parking lot screening required by County standards along 2/3 of road frontage or common lot, parcel or tract boundary. Due to the nature of the site use, limited maintenance resources, funding, and snow stacking concerns, Monument Academy proposes to deviate from County standard landscape screening requirements, while providing an appropriate program of landscape plantings for the school site.

Monument Academy understands that some neighborhood residents east of the site have requested landscape buffering along the east boundary of the school property. While Monument Academy notes that the nearest existing residential homes are over 1,000 feet east of the school site, and separated by the large wastewater treatment facility parcel, MA has revised the landscape plans as requested, providing LDC-compliant landscape buffering along the eastern boundary of the property.

5. **Section 6.2.2.D. Privacy fence between residential / non-residential uses.** Monument Academy is proposing an alternative landscape plan deleting the privacy fence typically required between residential and non-residential uses. An existing wastewater treatment facility adjoins the eastern site boundary, the Walker Road right-of-way provides a wide buffer between the school site and existing residential lots on the north side of the road, and there are no immediate plans for development of the adjoining property on the west and south sides of the school site. The Monument Academy School land use is complimentary to both existing and future residential and non-residential uses adjoining the property.

Based on the final architectural elevations for the school building, the maximum height of the building roof surface will not exceed the maximum height of 30 feet specified for the RR-5 zone.

Lastly, we respectfully remind the County that the Site Development Plan process is considered advisory as provided by State law under C.R.S. 22-32-124.

Please call if you have any questions or need any additional information.

Sincerely,

CRP Architects, P.C.



Brian Risley
Principal Architect

cc: John P. Schwab, P.E., JPS Engineering, Inc.
Mark McWilliams, Monument Academy Foundation
Matt Dunston, Walden Corporation