

Project Narrative

St. Luke's Episcopal Church / Hudson Hills Academy
Subdivision / Site Plan Special Use Permit Applications

June 4, 2018

Project Summary

St. Luke's Episcopal Church is applying to subdivide their property in order to lease the Church school building to Hudson Hills Academy, a private school currently operating at their Hanna Lane location in Beacon. This lease arrangement allows for the continued use and maintenance of the school building and will generate income for the Church that will help them offset the cost of upkeep for the remainder of the Church buildings and property.

The Church is dedicated to maintaining the original historical site plan, landscaping, and traffic patterns that have remained unchanged since the Church opened in 1869.

There are 4 parts to this application:

1. Subdivision of St. Luke's Episcopal Church

The subdivision of the property allows Hudson Hills Academy to use the existing Church school building as a private school. The subdivision is required because there can only be one principal building on each lot. Previously, the school building was accessory to the Church. Now that it is proposed to be a private school, it needs to be on its own property.

2. Site Plan Review – St. Luke's Episcopal Church

The Site Plan review is necessary to demonstrate that the remaining 8.8 acres Church property still meets Zoning Code after the 1-acre parcel is subdivided off to be leased to Hudson Hills Academy

3. Site Plan Review – Hudson Hills Academy

The Site Plan review is necessary to demonstrate that the newly created 1-acre parcel to be used by Hudson Hills Academy meets Zoning Code.

4. Special Use Permit – Hudson Hills Academy

The private school use is allowable in the R1-5 Zoning District by Special Use Permit

ARYEH SIEGEL

ARCHITECT

St. Luke's Episcopal Church

St. Luke's Church was design by the renowned architect Frederick Clarke Withers, and built in 1869. The Church is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The buildings, cemetery, and grounds were designed by Henry Winthrop Sargent. The school building is not considered to be a contributing factor in the historic designation due to the large addition constructed in the 1950s. In addition to the Church and school, there is also a Rectory building and a modern concrete block garage on the property.

The Church does not plan for any changes to their property after the subdivision.

Hudson Hills Academy

Hudson Hills Academy intends to open a private school in the existing building on the subdivided parcel. Hudson Hills Academy is planning for a total of approximately 85 students, 8 to 10 of which will be toddlers. The toddler classroom meets the requirements to be classified as a standard Education use because of the limited number of students, and the fact that it meets the required Building Code provisions.

The school does not expect the number of students to change significantly over time. Hudson Hills expects to reach 100 students at its maximum capacity after several years of operation. The school year generally follows the public school schedule, with classes from September through June. There are approximately 12 teachers and administrators.

Student Arrival & Departure

Most students will arrive by bus. There will normally be 4 small (30 foot) school buses arriving at the existing Wolcott Avenue entrance in the morning at 8:20 am. The buses will unload students in the bus loading area adjacent to the school entrance, and will leave the property at approximately 8:30 am using the existing Wolcott Avenue entrance. Adequate maneuvering space for buses to unload passengers, then turn around and exit is provided and demonstrated on the site plan. The arrival and dismissal traffic are coordinated and supervised by school personnel, and the available parking and loading space in the existing parking lot will accommodate the travel needs of the students and teachers.

Buses will return along the same route at 3:15 pm for student pick up after school dismissal.

School traffic will not be permitted to enter using the existing Rector Street entrance. School administration will direct parents driving their children to and from school not to park on Rector Street, in order to minimize impact on neighboring residential properties. The school anticipates no more than 6 - 8 students being driven to and from school in cars.

Parking on the property is shared between the Church and the School. For the overwhelming majority of the time, the Church and School schedules do not overlap, and parking can be dedicated to one use or the other. The Church is able to coordinate schedules and provide overflow parking on their lawns should the need ever arise.

There should be little impact on local traffic since there are only 4 buses using the Wolcott Avenue entrance, twice a day. The buses are on the property for a limited amount of time. Discrete signage will direct visitors to the Church and School.

The Wolcott Avenue internal drive has historically supported 2-way traffic and will continue to do so. Stop signs will be installed at the drive exit points.

School Building & Grounds

The school plans for minor renovation and cleanup inside the existing building. Very little will change at the exterior of the building or the site. The school plans to replace the single pane glass in the addition windows over time, but this will have no visual impact to the building since only the glass material will be replaced within the existing window frames. There will be a toddler playground in the existing fenced in play area. There will be a playground for the older students on the side of the building away from Rector Street.

A painted crosswalk will be installed across the entry at Rector Street. A stone dust path, similar to the Greenway Trail paths along the Fishkill Creek, will be installed between the Rector Street entrance and the school building entrance, for the rare occasions that people walk to the school.

Landscaping will be added to screen the school yard from Rector Street, and to shield views of the cemetery from the school and playground.

This application represents an opportunity for the Church to have the school building continue to be occupied by a compatible use consistent with its historic use, and to generate additional income to be used to maintain the overall landmark property. The school and the Church are both non-profit institutions, and must focus their limited resources carefully to allow for the continued maintenance of the historic property.