



Dear Mayor and Council Members:

On behalf of City Manager Ed Shikada, please find below the staff responses to questions made by Vice Mayor Kou regarding the [Monday, May 23 Council Meeting](#) Action Agenda Item 13, 1310 Bryant Street (Castilleja School Project) PUBLIC HEARING/QUASI JUDICIAL/LEGISLATIVE: Certification of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and Approval of Applications for (1) a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) Amendment to Increase Student Enrollment Initially to 450 Students Followed by Phased Conditional Increases to 540 Students; (2) a Parking Adjustment to Enable On-Site Parking Reduction; (3) a Variance to Replace Campus Gross Floor Area; (4) Architectural Review of Campus Redevelopment. Additionally, (5) Adoption of a Zoning Text Amendment Exempting Some Below-Grade Parking Facilities from Gross Floor Area. Zone District: R-1(10,000). Environmental Review: Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) Published July 30, 2020; Draft EIR Published July 15, 2019.

Staff responses are below:

1. **Question: What other Palo Alto R-1 parcels have recently received variances to increase floor area?**

Response: The department does not maintain a list of all variance applications and the requests sought with those applications. This information could be obtained but requires Council direction as it would take several hours to compile. Moreover, as each variance is evaluated based on the site specific factors and circumstances, it is not anticipated this data would be informative as the subject property is notably different from the vast majority other R1 lots.

2. **Question: What's the approximate range of percentage FAR increase we've granted via variances in R-1?**

Response: This information is not readily available.

3. **Question: What percent increase over allowed FAR will the variance for Castilleja represent?**

Response: Based on the subject property's lot area of 6.17 acres and the City's floor area allowances for R1(10,000) zoned properties, the maximum allowed floor area for a new non-residential development would be 81,379 square feet. Castilleja's existing gross floor area is 138,345 square feet. The proposed gross floor area is 128,687 square feet. The difference between 128,687 and 81,379 is 47,308 square feet. The percent increase the variance represents over allowed gross floor area for non-residential development is approximately fifty-eight percent (58%).

4. **Question: Is it correct that the variance goes with the land? So if the variance is granted to Castilleja and then it sells its property, could the buyer use that variance to build a very large home on the site?**

Response: The variance remains valid for the life of the project. Redevelopment of the site would be subject to applicable residential development standards, including a restriction on homes to a maximum of 6,000 square feet of gross floor area.

5. **Question: Do we have information on the increase in VMT (Vehicle Miles Travelled) for the expansion to 540 students under the proposed TDM that reduces parking needs by 14.4%?**
Response: A project specific VMT analysis was not prepared for this project; it was not a local or State requirement at the time the environmental impact report was initiated. This excerpt from the City's traffic consultant report addresses the topic as follows: "VMT can be estimated by multiplying the number of daily trips against the average distance traveled per trip. As shown in the Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan, existing VMT in the City is approximately 44.72 miles per person, or a total of 2,937,470 vehicles miles traveled. This is expected to decrease slightly as the Comprehensive Plan is implemented but would not drop below 39.12 miles per person and a total of 3,120,280 vehicle miles traveled. The project would contribute less than 0.001% of the existing citywide VMT."
6. **Question: Regarding packet page 175, why are Housing Impact Fees not included in the list of applicable impact fees?**
Response: Private schools are exempt from housing impact fees in accordance with PAMC 16.65.025 Exemptions.