

Note: The public hearing on this petition was opened on December 16, 2013 and continued to January 21, 2014. The staff analysis has been updated based on changes to the petition during the intervening time and a document highlighting the changes is attached.

REQUEST	Current Zoning: INST(CD), institutional, conditional Proposed Zoning: INST(CD) SPA, institutional, conditional, site plan amendment
LOCATION	Approximately 2.70 acres located on the southeast corner of the intersection at Rama Road and Sardis Road. (Council District 6 - Smith)
SUMMARY OF PETITION	The petition proposes to expand an existing conference center by adding a maximum 12,500 square feet within four buildings.
STAFF RECOMMENDATION	Staff recommends approval of this petition upon resolution of outstanding issues. The petitioner has responded to concerns about the intensification of the site by reducing the size and height of the proposed events building. These modifications have resulted in a reduction in the number of parking spaces required to serve the site. The petition is consistent with the <i>South District Plan</i> , as amended by a 2005 rezoning and subsequent site plan amendment in 2012.
PROPERTY OWNER	Michael T. Whitehead and Elizabeth M. Whitehead
PETITIONER	Michael T. Whitehead and Elizabeth M. Whitehead
AGENT/REPRESENTATIVE	N/A
COMMUNITY MEETING	Meeting is required and has been held. Report available online.

PLANNING STAFF REVIEW

- **Background**

The property was rezoned from R-3 (single family residential) to INST (CD) (institutional, conditional) in 2005 (rezoning petition 2005-100), in order to allow the establishment of a conference and retreat center. The approval allowed for the preservation of the existing 4,059-square foot house and the construction of a new 5,500 square-foot retreat center. Weddings and wedding receptions were prohibited.

A site plan amendment was approved in 2012 (rezoning petition 2012-039), to add weddings and wedding receptions as permitted uses.

- **Proposed Request Details**

The site plan amendment contains the following changes:

- Construction of a one story events building containing a maximum of 6,150 square feet with up to 3,000 square feet of assembly space. The new building will have an exterior covered porch.
- Construction of three new one story enclosed break-out rooms (Break-Out Rooms A, B, and C on the site plan) ranging in building area from 300 square feet to 540 square feet.
- Addition of new upper and lower patios to the existing manor house.
- Construction of a new gazebo, and events or dining deck.
- New gated gravel parking area containing two parking spaces with gravel driveway, located in front of the proposed one story building.
- Proposed bus/shuttle pick-up and drop-off area (able to accommodate an 8-foot by 30-foot vehicle) with waiting area. This new area will result in the removal of two existing parking spaces.
- Modifications to existing parking areas in order to accommodate fire access requirements and a new pick-up/drop-off area. Modifications will result in an increase in the number of on-site parking spaces from 41 to 46.

- Installation of internal walkways.
 - A total of 91 parking spaces are required (based upon parking calculation of one space per four seats), of which 46 will be provided on-site. An additional 50 spaces are proposed to be leased off-site.
 - A note committing that the design and placement of proposed structures, and building materials, will serve to enhance existing structures and overall character of the site.
 - A 15-foot Class C buffer along the eastern property line reduced from 20 feet with installation of a six-foot fence or wall. A 10-foot Class C buffer along the southern property line coupled with an existing 18-foot Class C buffer on the abutting property, for a total 28-foot wide Class C buffer.
 - **Existing Zoning and Land Use**
 - The subject property is currently occupied with a conference and retreat center, and is surrounded by single family residential neighborhoods, a condominium development, and institutional uses zoned R-3 (single family residential) and R-8MF (CD) (multi-family residential, conditional).
 - **Rezoning History in Area**
 - There have been no recent rezonings in the immediate area.
 - **Public Plans and Policies**
 - The *South District Plan* (1993), as amended by the 2005 rezoning and subsequent 2012 site plan amendment, shows the subject property as institutional.
 - This petition is consistent with the *South District Plan*.
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DEPARTMENT COMMENTS (see full department reports online)

- **Charlotte Area Transit System:** No comments received.
 - **Charlotte Department of Neighborhood & Business Services:** No issues.
 - **Transportation:** No issues.
 - **Vehicle Trip Generation:**
 - Current Zoning: 143 trips per day.
 - Proposed Zoning: 260 trips per day.
 - **Connectivity:** No issues.
 - **Charlotte Fire Department:** The Fire Department requests that access through the gate be a minimum of 16 feet in width for fire apparatus and 20-foot clear fire access road.
 - **Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools:** Non-residential petitions do not impact the number of students attending local schools.
 - **Charlotte-Mecklenburg Storm Water Services:** No issues.
 - **Charlotte-Mecklenburg Utilities Review:** No issues.
 - **Mecklenburg County Land Use and Environmental Services Agency:** No issues.
 - **Mecklenburg County Parks and Recreation Department:** No issues.
 - **Urban Forestry:** No issues.
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ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE SITE DESIGN (see full department reports online)

- **Site Design:** The following explains how the petition addresses the environmentally sensitive site design guidance in the *General Development Policies-Environment*.
 - This site meets minimum ordinance standards.

OUTSTANDING ISSUES

- The petitioner should:
 1. Identify the gross square footage for the existing two-story conference center on the site plan. Confirm the total square footage for the existing and proposed buildings.

2. Based upon the above, ensure that the required parking is correctly reflected on the site plan.
 3. In order to count the existing 18-foot Class C buffer on the abutting property towards meeting the requirement, an alternate buffer must be approved as per Section 12.302 and 12.304. This request must be approved prior to City Council decision.
 4. The petitioner add a note that plantings proposed in the sight triangle are low lying and will not obstruct visibility.
 5. Note 5d states that dumpsters are prohibited yet the note goes on to reference dumpsters. Confirm this information and amend on site plan accordingly.
 6. Provide elevations of the new buildings.
 7. Indicate if any portion of the existing storage unit to the rear of the site is within the buffer and indicate how this issue will be addressed.
 8. Add a note to the site plan that the parking agreement will be filed in the Register of Deeds prior to issuance of any permits.
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Attachments Online at www.rezoning.org

- Application
- Site Plan
- Community Meeting Report
- Charlotte Department of Neighborhood & Business Services Review
- Transportation Review
- Charlotte Fire Department Review
- Charlotte-Mecklenburg Storm Water Services Review
- Charlotte-Mecklenburg Utilities Review
- Mecklenburg County Land Use and Environmental Services Review
- Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation Review
- Urban Forestry Review

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