

DOCKET ITEM #4
Special Use Permit #2021-00011
3649 Wheeler Avenue
Heritage Montessori School

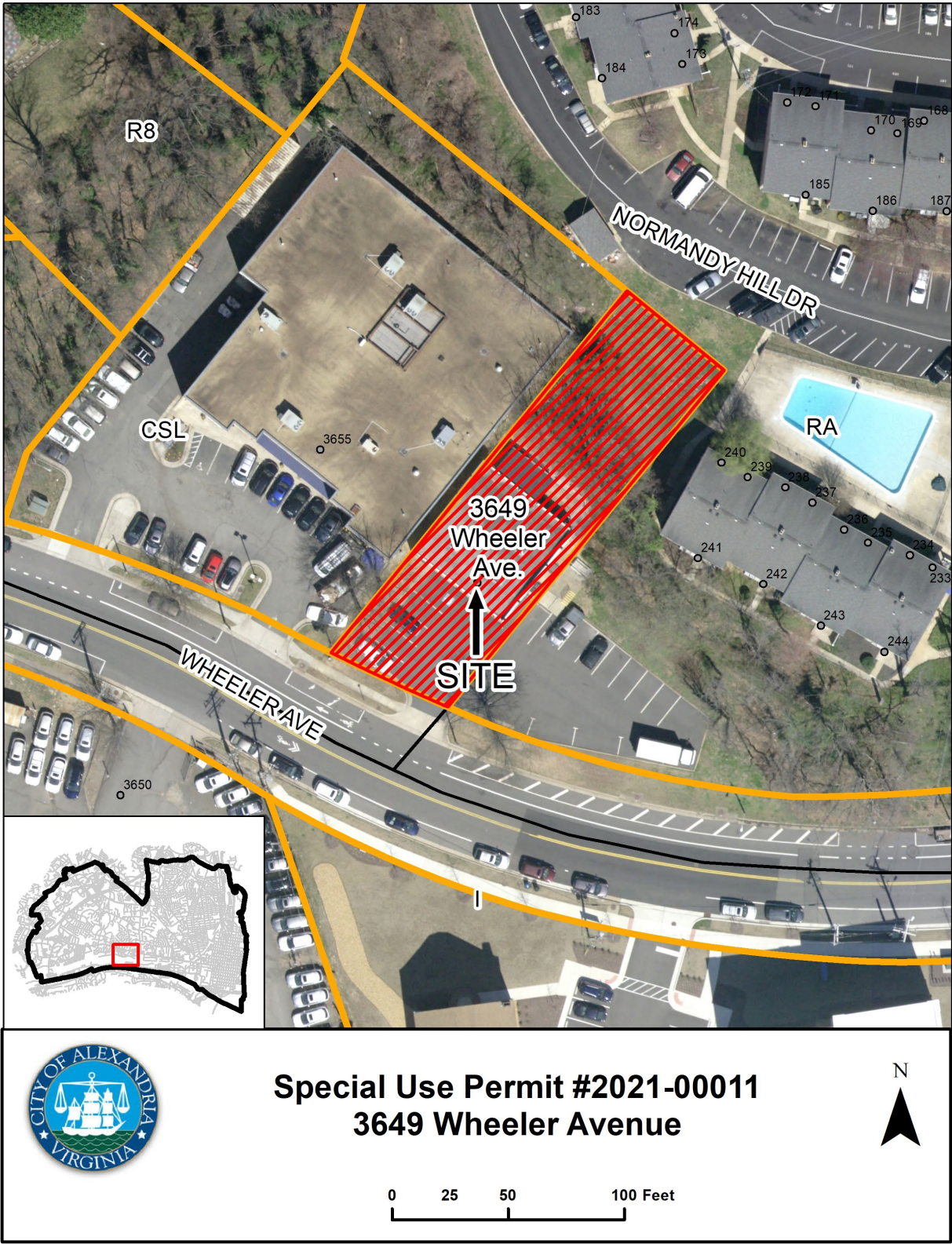
CONSENT AGENDA ITEM

If no one asks to speak about this case prior to the hearing, it will be approved without discussion as part of the Consent Agenda.

Application	General Data	
Request: Public hearing and consideration of a request for a Special Use Permit to operate a private academic school with over 20 students	Planning Commission Hearing:	May 4, 2021
	City Council Hearing:	May 15, 2021
Address: 3649 Wheeler Avenue	Zone:	CSL/Commercial service low
Applicant: Heritage Montessori Day & Preschool LLC	Small Area Plan:	Seminary Hill/Strawberry Hill

Staff Recommendation: APPROVAL subject to compliance with all applicable codes and ordinances and the recommended permit conditions found in Section III of this report.

Staff Reviewer: Ann Horowitz, ann.horowitz@alexandriava.gov
- Rachel Drescher, rachel.drescher@alexandriava.gov



PROJECT LOCATION MAP

I. REPORT SUMMARY

The applicant, Heritage Montessori Day & Preschool LLC, requests a Special Use Permit approval to operate a private academic school at 3649 Wheeler Avenue. Staff recommends approval of the Special Use Permit request with conditions as described in the report.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The subject parcel is located at 3649 Wheeler Avenue, and includes approximately 53 feet of frontage along Wheeler Avenue, and 10,334 square feet in total lot area. The property is developed with a two-story building approximately 4,800 square feet of gross floor area and parking area. The parking lot is accessed off Wheeler Avenue.



Figure 2 – Property from Wheeler Avenue

Surrounding the subject site is a mix of industrial, residential, and commercial uses. Islamic Relief USA is located to the west of the subject site, residential townhomes are located to the north and east of the subject site, and storage facilities and a vehicle storage yard is located to the south of the subject site. The Alexandria City Police Department is located about 400 feet east of the site on Wheeler Avenue.

BACKGROUND

Planning Commission approved Development Site Plan #85-002 in February of 1985. The application included approval for the construction of the existing building. The site plan was submitted to operate a furniture restoration and repair shop. The subject property was occupied by

this operation until last year when the space became vacant.

Staff approved a pick-up and drop off plan for a by-right day care center for 70 children of non-compulsory school age on March 1, 2021. The applicant would operate the existing day care establishment in conjunction with the subject of this SUP request, a private academic school. The letter of agreement for the existing day care center states that peak drop off times are 8 a.m. to 9 a.m. and peak pick-up times are from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. Out of the 16 parking spaces available to the applicant, ten of the spaces are used for pick-up and drop off. After parking, the participants are walked to the main entrance by their guardian, where a staff member meets them at the front door. The agreement covers the day care center, and the application of this pick-up and drop off agreement to the private academic school is evaluated in the analysis section of this report.

PROPOSAL

The applicant proposes to operate a Montessori school on the subject property. The applicant requests SUP approval of a private academic school use. The school use would occupy the entire building and serve 80 children of compulsory school age between kindergarten to 6th grade. There would be 15 employees on site.

Details of the applicant's proposed operation are:

<u>Hours of operation:</u>	8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.
<u>Pick-up and Drop-off:</u>	8 a.m. to 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. to 5 p.m.
<u>Number of children:</u>	80 kindergarten to 6 th grade students
<u>Number of teachers:</u>	15 teachers
<u>Play area:</u>	Schuyler Hamilton Jones Skateboard Park with RPCA approval and in compliance with state requirements for private academic schools
<u>Deliveries:</u>	No regular deliveries expected
<u>Noise:</u>	Minimal noise is expected. Outdoor play will occur twice a day for 30-60 minutes per classroom at an off-site location
<u>Trash/Litter:</u>	Three large trash bags per day is expected to be collected once a week.

PICK-UP AND DROP OFF PLAN

For transportation of the kindergarten through 6th grade students, the applicant proposes the same process as the pick-off and drop-off plan approved for the day care operation. Parents would enter the parking lot off Wheeler Avenue and park vehicles in one of the 10 parking spaces

reserved for pick-up and drop off. Parents would come to the front of the building to drop off and pick-up their children. Morning drop off would occur between 8 a.m. and 9 a.m. and afternoon pick-up would occur between 4 p.m. and 5 p.m.

PARKING

Section 8-200 (A)(11) of the Zoning Ordinance requires that an elementary school provides one parking space for every 25 classroom seats and a day care within the enhanced transit area must provide 0.25 spaces for every 1000 square feet. The day care portion of the school uses 2,421 square feet of the building and the parking requirement is one space. With 80 students, the private academic school requires four parking spaces. The combined institution would be required to provide a total of five parking spaces. The existing 16-space parking lot meets and exceeds the minimum requirement.

ZONING/ MASTER PLAN DESIGNATION

The subject site is located within the CSL / Commercial Service Low zone. Private academic school uses require SUP approval in this zone, pursuant to Section 4-303(V)

The proposed use is consistent with the area. The Seminary Hill/Strawberry Hill small area plan designates the parcel for industrial use, however, staff feels this use is transitionally compatible between the storage areas across Wheeler Avenue and the neighboring residential use and nonprofit organization.

II. STAFF ANALYSIS

Staff supports the applicant's request for a Special Use Permit to allow a private academic school use at 3649 Wheeler Avenue.

Staff does not anticipate neighborhood impacts, given that commercial and industrial uses surround the proposed institution. Although there is a limited potential for traffic congestion on Wheeler Avenue during pick-up and drop off times, staff believes the reserved ten-space parking area and one-hour window at both times is sufficient to accommodate the morning and afternoon transfer of students for both the day care and school uses. Nonetheless, staff has included Condition #3 for the Director of Planning and Zoning to require revisions to the pick-up and drop off plan if traffic impacts result.

Staff has provided recommended conditions similar to other private educational uses. Recommended conditions #8 and #9 encourage patrons and employees to use alternative transportation such as Metro and bicycle. Recommended condition #8 requires that any odors be controlled to not bother surrounding users. Recommended condition #10 ensures that deliveries do not happen at night to ensure area residents are not affected by late night noise. Recommended condition #12 allows staff and the Planning Director to re-evaluate compliance with all conditions and determine if any negative externalities are provided from the subject use's operation to other surrounding uses that were not anticipated.

Subject to the conditions stated in Section III of this report, staff recommends approval of the applicant's Special Use Permit request.

III. RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS

Staff recommends *approval* subject to compliance with all applicable codes and ordinances and the following conditions:

1. The special use permit shall be granted to the applicant only or to any business or entity in which the applicant has controlling interest. (P&Z)
2. The applicant shall conduct employee training sessions on an ongoing basis, including as part of any employee orientation, to discuss all Special Use Permit provisions and requirements. (P&Z)
3. The applicant shall comply with the drop-off and pick-up agreement signed on March 1, 2021. Drop-off and pick-up shall not occur on public rights-of-way. The applicant shall ensure that traffic does not back up onto Wheeler Avenue. The Director of Planning and Zoning reserves the right to revisit this agreement and may impose amended or additional requirements to ensure pick-up and drop-off facilities are maintained. (P&Z)
4. The applicant shall apply to the Department of Recreation to establish times and schedules to use Schuyler Hamilton Jones Skateboard Park. (P&Z)
5. All loudspeakers shall be prohibited from the exterior of the building. (T&ES)
6. Students outdoor (backyard) activities shall be conducted between 9 am and 5 pm. (T&ES)
7. The applicant shall require its employees who drive to use off-street parking. (T&ES)
8. The applicant shall encourage its employees to use public transportation to travel to and from work. The business shall contact Go Alex at goalex@alexandriava.gov for information on establishing an employee transportation benefits program. (T&ES)
9. The applicant shall provide information about alternative forms of transportation to access the site, including but not limited to printed and electronic business promotional material, posting on the business website, and other similar methods. Contact Go Alex at goalex@alexandriava.gov for more information about available resources. (T&ES)
10. Litter on the site and on public rights-of-way and spaces adjacent to or within 75 feet of the premises shall be picked up at least twice a day and at the close of business, and more often if necessary, to prevent an unsightly or unsanitary accumulation, on each day that the business is open to the public. (T&ES)
11. The Director of Planning and Zoning shall review the special use permit after it has been operational for one year, and shall docket the matter for consideration by the Planning

Commission and City Council if (a) there have been documented violations of the permit conditions which were not corrected immediately, constitute repeat violations or which create a direct and immediate adverse zoning impact on the surrounding community; (b) the director has received a request from any person to docket the permit for review, as the result of a complaint that rises to the level of a violation of the permit conditions or (c) the director has determined that there are problems with the operation of the use and that new or revised conditions are needed. (P&Z)

STAFF: Tony LaColla, AICP, Division Chief, Land Use Services
Ann Horowitz, Principal Planner
Rachel Drescher, Urban Planner

Staff Note: In accordance with section 11-506(c) of the zoning ordinance, construction or operation shall be commenced and diligently and substantially pursued within 18 months of the date of granting of a special use permit by City Council or the special use permit shall become void.

IV. CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

Legend: C - code requirement R - recommendation S - suggestion F - finding

Transportation & Environmental Services:

- R-1 All loudspeakers shall be prohibited from the exterior of the building. (T&ES)
- R-2 Students outdoor (backyard) activities shall be conducted between 9 am and 5 pm. (T&ES)
- R-3 The applicant shall require its employees who drive to use off-street parking. (T&ES)
- R-4 The applicant shall encourage its employees to use public transportation to travel to and from work. The business shall contact Go Alex at goalex@alexandriava.gov for information on establishing an employee transportation benefits program. (T&ES)
- R-5 The applicant shall provide information about alternative forms of transportation to access the site, including but not limited to printed and electronic business promotional material, posting on the business website, and other similar methods. Contact Go Alex at goalex@alexandriava.gov for more information about available resources. (T&ES)
- R-6 Litter on the site and on public rights-of-way and spaces adjacent to or within 75 feet of the premises shall be picked up at least twice a day and at the close of business, and more often if necessary, to prevent an unsightly or unsanitary accumulation, on each day that the business is open to the public. (T&ES)
- C-1 The applicant shall comply with the City of Alexandria's Solid Waste Control, Title 5, Chapter 1, which sets forth the requirements for the recycling of materials (Sec. 5-1-99). In order to comply with this code requirement, the applicant shall provide a completed Recycling Implementation Plan (RIP) Form within 60 days of SUP approval. Contact the City's Recycling Program Coordinator at (703) 746-4410, or via e-mail at commercialrecycling@alexandriava.gov, for information about completing this form. (T&ES)
- C-2 The applicant shall comply with the City of Alexandria's Noise Control Code, Title 11, Chapter 5, which sets the maximum permissible noise level as measured at the property line. (T&ES)
- C-3 Section 5-1-42- Collection by Private collectors. (c) Time of collection. Solid waste shall be collected from all premises not serviced by the city at least once each week. No collections may be made between the hours of 11:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. (6:00 a.m. from May 1, through September 30) if the collection area is less than 500 feet from a residential area. (T&ES)

Code Enforcement:

No comments received

Fire:

No comments received

Health:

No comments received

Recreation, Parks & Cultural Activities:

No comments received

Police Department:

No comments received



APPLICATION

SPECIAL USE PERMIT

SPECIAL USE PERMIT # _____

PROPERTY LOCATION: 3649 Wheeler Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22304

TAX MAP REFERENCE: 060.04-01-13 **ZONE:** CSL

APPLICANT:

Name: Heritage Montessori Day & Preschool LLC

Address: 625 East Monroe Avenue #148, Alexandria, VA 22301

PROPOSED USE: Private Academic School

- ☒ THE UNDERSIGNED, hereby applies for a Special Use Permit in accordance with the provisions of Article XI, Section 4-11-500 of the 1992 Zoning Ordinance of the City of Alexandria, Virginia.
- ☒ THE UNDERSIGNED, having obtained permission from the property owner, hereby grants permission to the City of Alexandria staff and Commission Members to visit, inspect, and photograph the building premises, land etc., connected with the application.
- ☒ THE UNDERSIGNED, having obtained permission from the property owner, hereby grants permission to the City of Alexandria to post placard notice on the property for which this application is requested, pursuant to Article IV, Section 4-1404(D)(7) of the 1992 Zoning Ordinance of the City of Alexandria, Virginia.
- ☒ THE UNDERSIGNED, hereby attests that all of the information herein provided and specifically including all surveys, drawings, etc., required to be furnished by the applicant are true, correct and accurate to the best of their knowledge and belief. The applicant is hereby notified that any written materials, drawings or illustrations submitted in support of this application and any specific oral representations made to the Director of Planning and Zoning on this application will be binding on the applicant unless those materials or representations are clearly stated to be non-binding or illustrative of general plans and intentions, subject to substantial revision, pursuant to Article XI, Section 11-207(A)(10), of the 1992 Zoning Ordinance of the City of Alexandria, Virginia.

Dr. Charlotte Haynes

Print Name of Applicant or Agent

625 East Monroe Avenue #148

Mailing/Street Address

Alexandria, VA 22301

City and State

Zip Code

10

Lo. Dany

Signature

2/2/2021

Date

(703) 313-1249

Telephone #

Fax #

heritagemontessorivaa@gmail.com

Email address

PROPERTY OWNER'S AUTHORIZATION

As the property owner of _____, I hereby
(Property Address)
grant the applicant authorization to apply for the _____ use as
(use)
described in this application.

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Please Print

Address: _____ Email: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

1. Floor Plan and Plot Plan. As a part of this application, the applicant is required to submit a floor plan and plot or site plan with the parking layout of the proposed use. The SUP application checklist lists the requirements of the floor and site plans. The Planning Director may waive requirements for plan submission upon receipt of a written request which adequately justifies a waiver.

☒ Required floor plan and plot/site plan attached.

☐ Requesting a waiver. See attached written request.

2. The applicant is the (check one):

☐ Owner

☐ Contract Purchaser

☒ Lessee or

☐ Other: _____ of the subject property.

State the name, address and percent of ownership of any person or entity owning an interest in the applicant or owner, unless the entity is a corporation or partnership, in which case identify each owner of more than three percent.

See page (3).

PROPERTY OWNER'S AUTHORIZATION

As the property owner, I hereby grant the applicant use of 3649 Wheeler Ave.
(property address), for the purposes of operating a MONTessorI Dayr Preschool/Use
business as described in this application. I also grant permission to the City of Alexandria to visit,
inspect, photograph and post placard notice on my property.

Name: Agnes G. Spicer

Phone: 703-919-0897
Steve Spicer

Address: 5714 Tremont Ct
Alexandria, VA. 22303

Email:

Signature: Agnes G. Spicer

Date: Apr. 27, 2021

1. The applicant is the (check one):

Owner

Contract Purchaser Lessee or

Other:

of the subject property.

State the name, address and percent of ownership of any person or entity owning an interest in the applicant or owner, unless the entity is a corporation or partnership, in which case identify each owner and the percent of ownership.

If property owner or applicant is being represented by an authorized agent such as an attorney, realtor, or other person for which there is some form of compensation, does this agent or the business in which the agent is employed have a business license to operate in the City of Alexandria, Virginia?

Yes. Provide proof of current City business license

No. The agent shall obtain a business license prior to filing application, if required by the City Code.

OWNERSHIP AND DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Use additional sheets if necessary

1. Applicant. State the name, address and percent of ownership of any person or entity owning an interest in the applicant, unless the entity is a corporation or partnership, in which case identify each owner of more than three percent. The term ownership interest shall include any legal or equitable interest held at the time of the application in the real property which is the subject of the application.

Name	Address	Percent of Ownership
1. Dr. Charlotte Haynes	625 East Monroe Ave. #148, Alexandria, VA 22301	50%
2. Ms. Rosemary Davis	625 East Monroe Ave. #148, Alexandria, VA 22301	50%
3.		

2. Property. State the name, address and percent of ownership of any person or entity owning an interest in the property located at 3649 Wheeler Ave., Alexandria, VA 22304 (address), unless the entity is a corporation or partnership, in which case identify each owner of more than three percent. The term ownership interest shall include any legal or equitable interest held at the time of the application in the real property which is the subject of the application.

Name	Address	Percent of Ownership
1. Agnes G. Spicer	5714 Tremont Ct. Alexandria, VA 22303	100%
2.		
3.		

3. Business or Financial Relationships. Each person or entity indicated above in sections 1 and 2, with an ownership interest in the applicant or in the subject property are required to disclose **any** business or financial relationship, as defined by Section 11-350 of the Zoning Ordinance, existing at the time of this application, or within the 12-month period prior to the submission of this application with any member of the Alexandria City Council, Planning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals or either Boards of Architectural Review. **All fields must be filled out completely. Do not leave blank. (If there are no relationships please indicate each person or entity and "None" in the corresponding fields).**

For a list of current council, commission and board members, as well as the definition of business and financial relationship, [click here](#).

Name of person or entity	Relationship as defined by Section 11-350 of the Zoning Ordinance	Member of the Approving Body (i.e. City Council, Planning Commission, etc.)
1. Dr. Charlotte Haynes	None	None
2. Ms. Rosemary Davis	None	None
3. Agnes G. Spicer	None	None

NOTE: Business or financial relationships of the type described in Sec. 11-350 that arise after the filing of this application and before each public hearing must be disclosed prior to the public hearings.

As the applicant or the applicant's authorized agent, I hereby attest to the best of my ability that the information provided above is true and correct.

2/2/2021
Date

Dr. Charlotte Haynes
Printed Name

[Signature]
Signature

If property owner or applicant is being represented by an authorized agent such as an attorney, realtor, or other person for which there is some form of compensation, does this agent or the business in which the agent is employed have a business license to operate in the City of Alexandria, Virginia?

☒ **Yes.** Provide proof of current City business license

☐ **No.** The agent shall obtain a business license prior to filing application, if required by the City Code.

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

3. The applicant shall describe below the nature of the request **in detail** so that the Planning Commission and City Council can understand the nature of the operation and the use. The description should fully discuss the nature of the activity. (Attach additional sheets if necessary.)

This request is for a preferred site for a Montessori school serving families with children ages 20 months to 12 years. This school will operate between 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM Monday through Friday. This school will operate throughout the year. We will be licensed for 150 children. 70 preschoolers and 80 children in grades K-6.

USE CHARACTERISTICS

4. The proposed special use permit request is for (check one):

- ☒ a new use requiring a special use permit,
☐ an expansion or change to an existing use without a special use permit,
☐ an expansion or change to an existing use with a special use permit,
☐ other. Please describe: _____

5. Please describe the capacity of the proposed use:

A. How many patrons, clients, pupils and other such users do you expect? 150 students
Specify time period (i.e., day, hour, or shift).

Monday-Friday from 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM

B. How many employees, staff and other personnel do you expect? 15
Specify time period (i.e., day, hour, or shift).

All staff work from 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday

6. Please describe the proposed hours and days of operation of the proposed use:

Day:

Monday through Friday

Hours:

8:00 AM - 5:00 PM

7. Please describe any potential noise emanating from the proposed use.

A. Describe the noise levels anticipated from all mechanical equipment and patrons.

Anticipated noise from outdoor play.

B. How will the noise be controlled?

Noise from outdoor play limited to 30 mins to 1 hour per classroom twice-a-day. At all other times, children are inside.

8. Describe any potential odors emanating from the proposed use and plans to control them:

None

9. Please provide information regarding trash and litter generated by the use.

A. What type of trash and garbage will be generated by the use? (i.e. office paper, food wrappers)

Disposables including food wrappers, utensils & office paper.

B. How much trash and garbage will be generated by the use? (i.e. # of bags or pounds per day or per week)

3 large trash bags per day.

C. How often will trash be collected?

Once per week

D. How will you prevent littering on the property, streets and nearby properties?

By encouraging children to put garbage in designated cans and recycling on a daily basis.

10. Will any hazardous materials, as defined by the state or federal government, be handled, stored, or generated on the property?

☐ Yes.

☒ No.

If yes, provide the name, monthly quantity, and specific disposal method below:

11. Will any organic compounds, for example paint, ink, lacquer thinner, or cleaning or degreasing solvent, be handled, stored, or generated on the property?

☐ Yes. ☒ No.

If yes, provide the name, monthly quantity, and specific disposal method below:

12. What methods are proposed to ensure the safety of nearby residents, employees and patrons?

Fencing around proposed playground; Children will be supervised at all times; Parents will park in designated parking lot; Student drop-off at the front door.

ALCOHOL SALES

13.

- A. Will the proposed use include the sale of beer, wine, or mixed drinks?

☐ Yes ☒ No

If yes, describe existing (if applicable) and proposed alcohol sales below, including if the ABC license will include on-premises and/or off-premises sales.

PARKING AND ACCESS REQUIREMENTS

14. A. How many parking spaces of each type are provided for the proposed use:

15 Standard spaces
 Compact spaces
1 Handicapped accessible spaces.
 Other.

<p>Planning and Zoning Staff Only</p> <p>Required number of spaces for use per Zoning Ordinance Section 8-200A <u> </u></p> <p>Does the application meet the requirement? [] Yes [] No</p>

B. Where is required parking located? (*check one*)

☒ on-site
☐ off-site

If the required parking will be located off-site, where will it be located?

PLEASE NOTE: Pursuant to Section 8-200 (C) of the Zoning Ordinance, commercial and industrial uses may provide off-site parking within 500 feet of the proposed use, provided that the off-site parking is located on land zoned for commercial or industrial uses. All other uses must provide parking on-site, except that off-street parking may be provided within 300 feet of the use with a special use permit.

C. If a reduction in the required parking is requested, pursuant to Section 8-100 (A) (4) or (5) of the Zoning Ordinance, complete the PARKING REDUCTION SUPPLEMENTAL APPLICATION.

☐ **Parking reduction requested; see attached supplemental form**

15. Please provide information regarding loading and unloading facilities for the use:

A. How many loading spaces are available for the use?

<p>Planning and Zoning Staff Only</p> <p>Required number of loading spaces for use per Zoning Ordinance Section 8-200 <u> </u></p> <p>Does the application meet the requirement? [] Yes [] No</p>
--

- B. Where are off-street loading facilities located? Not Applicable
- C. During what hours of the day do you expect loading/unloading operations to occur?
Not Applicable
- D. How frequently are loading/unloading operations expected to occur, per day or per week, as appropriate?
Not Applicable

16. Is street access to the subject property adequate or are any street improvements, such as a new turning lane, necessary to minimize impacts on traffic flow?

Yes. Street access is adequate.

SITE CHARACTERISTICS

17. Will the proposed uses be located in an existing building? ☒ Yes ☐ No
- Do you propose to construct an addition to the building? ☐ Yes ☒ No
- How large will the addition be? _____ square feet.

18. What will the total area occupied by the proposed use be?

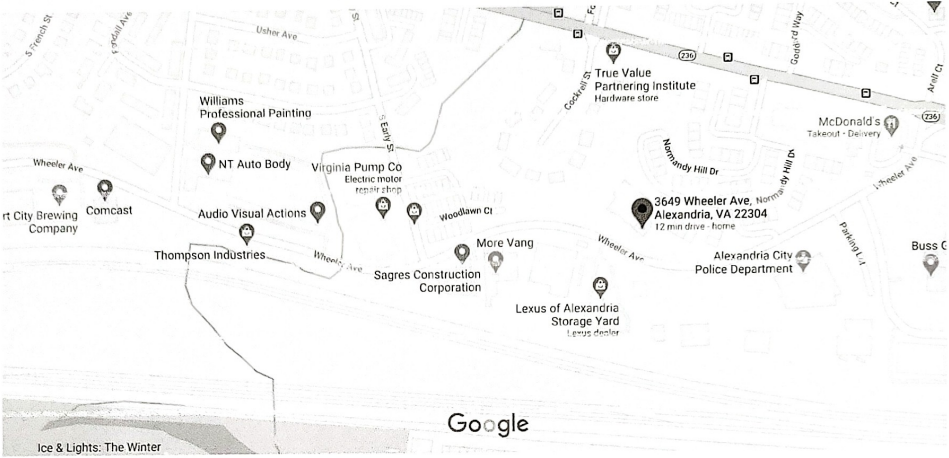
4843 sq. ft. (existing) + _____ sq. ft. (addition if any) = 4843 sq. ft. (total)

19. The proposed use is located in: (check one)

☒ a stand alone building
☐ a house located in a residential zone
☐ a warehouse
☐ a shopping center. Please provide name of the center: _____
☐ an office building. Please provide name of the building: _____
☐ other. Please describe: _____

End of Application

Google Maps 3649 Wheeler Ave



3649 Wheeler Ave

Alexandria, VA 22304
Building



Directions



Save



Nearby

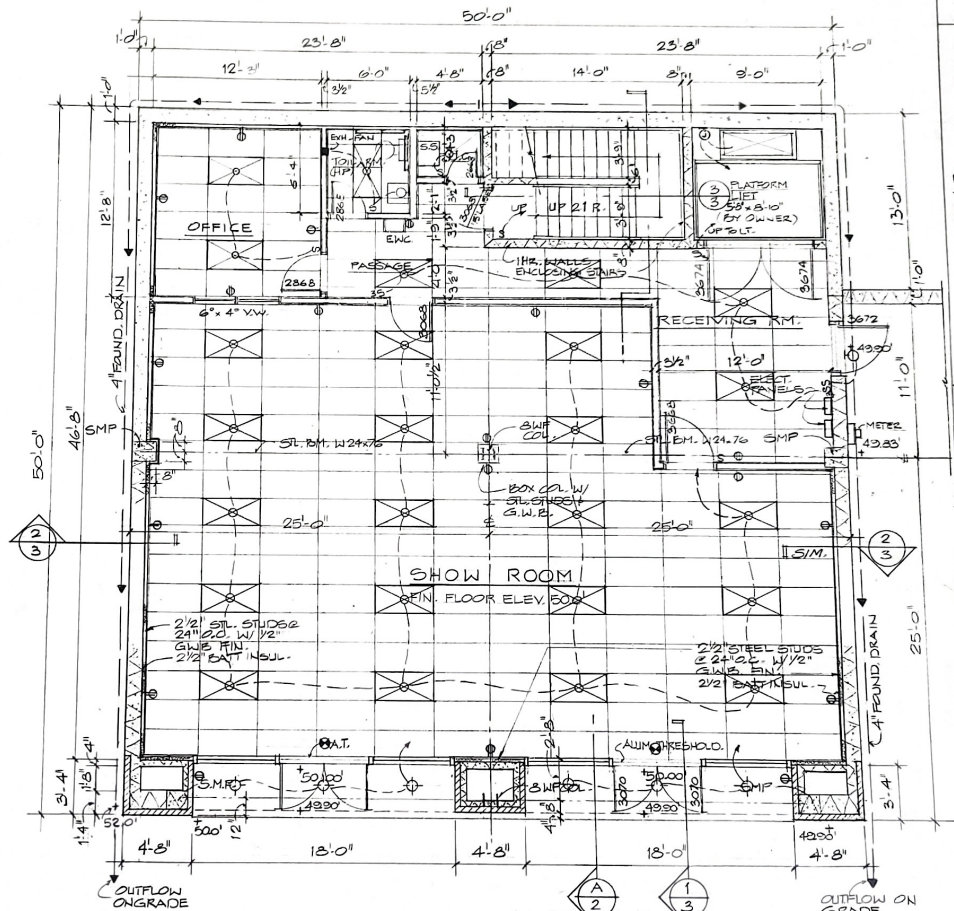
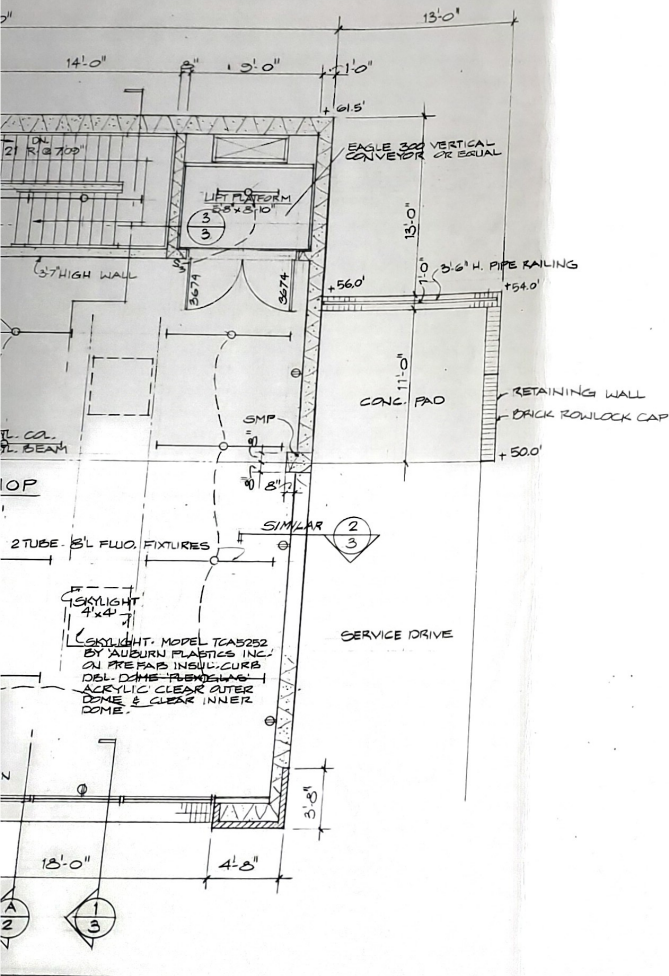


Send to your
phone

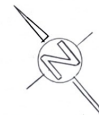


Share

Photos



FIRST FLOOR PLAN
3/16" = 1'-0"



FLOOR PLANS
• NOTES

SPICER'S UPHOLSTREY SHOP
3649 WHEELER AVENUE,
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA

2/20/85

SHEET

1

OF 3

