

**INDIAN RIVER COUNTY, FLORIDA
M E M O R A N D U M**

TO: Indian River County Board of County Commissioners

THROUGH: John A. Titkanich Jr., County Administrator

FROM: Patrick J. Murphy; Chief, Long Range Planning

DATE: February 10, 2025

SUBJECT: **Glendale Baptist Church, Inc.'s Request for Special Exception Use and Site Plan Approval for a Grades 6-10 Private School [SP-SE-24-05-16 / 91100064-96211]**

It is requested that the data presented herein be given formal consideration by the Board of County Commissioners at its regular meeting of February 25, 2025.

DESCRIPTION & CONDITIONS

MBV Engineering, Inc., on behalf of Glendale Baptist Church, Inc., is requesting special exception use and site plan approval to allow for the interior modification of the existing campus of buildings for the purpose of creating a grades 6-10 private school. The 17.01-acre site is located west of and adjacent to 58th Avenue SW, north of 5th Street SW, and south of 1st Street SW, specifically at 455 58th Avenue SW (see attachment 1). The site is zoned A-1, Agricultural District, a zoning district which requires special exception use approval for a school (educational center, including primary and secondary schools).

Glendale Baptist Church, Inc. (fka Immanuel Baptist Church) was originally approved as *place of worship* in 1987 (SP-MA-87-01-01), constructed in 1990, and was later expanded in 2003. The facility includes a 12,000 square foot two-story church/assembly building, multiple accessory modular buildings, and associated parking facilities. Also in 2003, County Planning staff granted approval for the construction of a communications tower for cellular service. The tower, which is owned by Verizon Communications, Inc. is located on the far western portion of the property.

The BCC is requested to consider the special exception use and site plan approval request for the proposed school facility, to approve, approve with conditions, or deny the request for special exception use.

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION (PZC) RECOMMENDATION:

At its meeting of January 23, 2025, the PZC voted 7-0 to recommend that the BCC grant special exception use and site plan approval for the school facility, with the conditions recommended by staff.

ANALYSIS

1. **Size of Site:** 17.01 acres
2. **Zoning Classification:** A-1, Agricultural District (up to 1 unit/5 acres)

3. **Land Use Designation:** AG-1, Agriculture-1 (up to 1 unit/5 acres)
4. **Building Area:** 17,493 square feet (all existing, no new buildings proposed)
5. **Impervious Area:** 66,079 square feet (1.52 acres) or 8.92%
6. **Open Space:** Required: 60%
Proposed: 91.31%
7. **Off-Street Parking:** Required: 30 spaces for the grades 6-10 school
Required: 83 spaces for the church sanctuary (250 seats)
Proposed: 121 spaces; operation of uses does not overlap

Note: The school will operate Monday through Friday (from 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.), while the church operates on Sundays, for religious services, and Wednesday evenings, for bible study. Thus, the separate uses will not compete for available parking.

8. **Utilities:** The site is currently served by public water and sewer service provided by County Utility Services. The County Department of Utility Services and the Department of Health have approved these utility provisions.
9. **Access and Traffic Circulation:** Access to the project site is provided via an existing full-movement driveway connection to 58th Avenue SW at the SE corner of the property (see attachment 3). A secondary driveway (emergency access only) is proposed in the NE portion of the site. No other driveways are required or proposed. The traffic circulation plan includes a two-way internal driveway with a one-way loop road that circles internally through the parking area in front of the school. The approved site plan indicates a queuing area that can accommodate approximately 20 vehicles prior to the drop-off point.

The existing driveway connection and traffic circulation plan have been reviewed and approved by Traffic Engineering and Fire Prevention. Due to the low volume of traffic that will be generated from a school of this size (1 classroom for each of the five grade levels), a traffic impact study (TIS) was not required. Also, no other offsite traffic improvements (i.e. turn lanes) are required or proposed.

10. **Stormwater Management:** The project's stormwater management design that was previously approved and constructed includes a master stormwater system with two (2) separate stormwater management areas that are interconnected with stormwater pipes and drainage structures that direct the project's stormwater runoff into the master system (see attachment 3). Since the applicant does not propose any additional impervious areas the stormwater system does not require any expansion or improvements.

11. **Environmental Issues:**

- a. *Wetlands:* County Environmental Planning staff has determined that no jurisdictional wetlands exist on the subject site. Therefore, no wetlands criteria apply to the proposed development.
- b. *Uplands:* Since the project site exceeds 5 acres, the County's native upland set-aside criteria would apply. However, there were no intact upland plant communities identified by the Environmental Planning staff and so no preservation criteria apply to this site.

- c. *Tree Preservation:* Presently, the project site is partially wooded with a mixture of hardwood tree species (e.g. live oak), non-hardwood tree species (e.g. pine trees), and cabbage palms. County Environmental Planning staff has reviewed and approved the project's landscape plan. Multiple large oaks are located throughout the site, which were planted during initial construction and when the church operations were expanded. The entire north and west property lines are densely vegetated and will serve as an enlarged buffer from the abutting A-1 parcels. No existing trees are proposed for removal.

12. Required Dedications and Improvements:

There are no required dedications or off-site improvements associated with this request.

- 13. Landscape Plan:** A landscape and buffer plan has been reviewed and approved for the subject site. With respect to buffering, the plan depicts 20-foot-wide Type "C" buffers along all four (4) property lines. As mentioned above, the north and west buffers are met via existing vegetation. Additional trees are proposed for planting within any gaps in the existing vegetation along the south and east property lines. Rows of new shrubs will be planted within perimeter buffers where not completely vegetated by existing plants.

- 14. Concurrency:** The applicant has applied for and obtained a conditional concurrency certificate for the project, which is sufficient for site plan approval. The concurrency certificate was based upon a concurrency determination that adequate capacity was available to serve the subject project at the time of the determination. It shall be noted that schools are exempt from paying impact fees, so a final concurrency certificate is not required prior to issuance of building permits for this project.

15. Surrounding Land Use and Zoning:

North: Undeveloped Land / A-1

East: 58th Avenue SW, Citrus Springs Village PD / PD

South: Single-Family Homes / A-1

West: One, Large Single-Family Estate / A-1

- 16. Required Notice:** For this project, staff was required to publish a legal advertisement in the newspaper, send out notice by mail to all property owners within 300 feet of the project site, and post a project notice sign at the project site.

- 17. Specific Land Use Criteria (Administrative Permit Use):** Pursuant to LDR section 971.14(4), the specific criteria for the proposed school (Educational centers including schools, primary and secondary) are addressed as follows:

- a. *Sites for secondary schools shall be located near thoroughfares so as to discourage traffic along local residential streets in residential subdivisions. Elementary schools should be discouraged from locating adjacent to major arterial roadways;*

NOTE: The site fronts upon and has direct access to 58th Avenue SW, which is identified as an arterial roadway on the County's Thoroughfare Plan. However, the existing building that is proposed for school classrooms is setback almost 300 feet from 58th Avenue SW. Therefore, there is adequate separation for younger school-aged children that will attend the 6th grade class.

- b. *For the type of facility proposed, the minimum spatial requirements for the site shall be similar to standards utilized by the Indian River County school board and the State;*

NOTE: Based on the smaller scale of the school (maximum of 70 students), the minimum spatial requirements provided by the proposed site design are similar to the standards utilized by the Indian River County School Board and the State of Florida.

- c. *Except as provided below, no building designed for occupancy by students shall be located within one hundred (100) feet of any property line not adjacent to a street or roadway, and no building designed for occupancy by students shall be located within fifty (50) feet of any property line abutting a local road right-of-way;*

a. *Where a building designed for occupancy by students is to be located adjacent to a mixed use or TND site, or to a property zoned RM-6, RM-8, RM-10, commercial, or industrial, and there is a non-residential use or reduced setback project (small lot subdivision or planned development) on that adjacent property, then the building setback along that adjacent property may be reduced to no less than twenty-five (25) feet.*

b. *Where a building designed for occupancy by students is to be located adjacent to property zoned RM-4, RM-3, single-family, or agricultural, and there is a non-residential and non-agricultural use on that adjacent property, then the building setback for the educational use may be reduced to no less than fifty (50) feet.*

c. *Where a setback of one hundred (100) feet is required, the setback may be reduced to fifty (50) feet if a Type B buffer with a six (6) foot opaque feature is provided within the setback.*

d. *Where the education facility is located adjacent to an existing cemetery, place of worship, childcare facility, adult care facility, community center, school, or other non-residential use, buffer requirements for each use may be combined into a single buffer located between the education facility and adjacent use. The single buffer shall be greater than or equal to a Type "C" buffer.*

NOTE: The site is not located adjacent to a mixed use, TND site, or any of the zoning districts mentioned above, nor has the applicant requested any building setback reductions. Based on the above-referenced school building setback requirements, the school building must be setback 100 feet from any property lines not adjacent to a street, and 50 feet from the 58th Avenue SW property line. The existing building is located more than 157 feet from all property lines. Buffer requirements are not being combined.

- d. *The applicant shall demonstrate that existing and proposed recreation, parking, and traffic circulation facilities adequately accommodate projected student enrollment including adequate pick-up and drop-off queue area to ensure that vehicle queues during peak pick-up and drop-off times do not adversely impact adjacent streets.*

NOTE: The Engineer of Record (EOR) submitted a traffic circulation and vehicle queue plan to the County's Traffic Engineering Division and Fire Prevention Bureau during review of the site plan. These plans were approved by the applicable County staff. Recreation is provided via open space area located behind the church/school building

and away from adjacent residences. Also, the provided parking exceeds the minimum required parking for the school by 91 parking spaces.

5. No rooms within the school shall be regularly used for the housing of students when located in a single-family residential district;

NOTE: This proposal does not include any housing for students.

6. The facilities shall have a Type "C" buffer in the A-1, A-2, A-3, RFD, RS-1, RS-2, RS-3 and RS-6 districts;

a. The board of county commissioners may waive or reduce the buffer requirements where the educational facility is located next to an existing cemetery, place of worship, childcare facility, adult care facility, community center, school, or other non-residential use. Consideration shall be given to security, noise, and visual impacts. Where a waiver or buffer reduction is granted, normal perimeter landscaping requirements shall apply, and alternative requirements (such as fencing) may be required.

NOTE: The applicant has not requested to waive/reduce any of the buffer requirements.

7. The facilities shall have a Type "C" buffer in all other residential districts not listed in the subsection above.

i. The board of county commissioners may waive or reduce the buffer requirements where the educational facility is located next to an existing cemetery, place of worship, child care facility, adult care facility, community center, school, or other non-residential use. Consideration shall be given to security, noise, and visual impacts. Where a waiver or buffer reduction is granted, normal perimeter landscaping requirements shall apply, and alternative requirements (such as fencing) may be required.

NOTE: The project site is located within the A-1 zoning district. Therefore, this subsection does not apply.

All conditions recommended by staff have been accepted by the applicant.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the analysis above, staff recommends that the BCC grant special exception use and site plan approval for the school facility, with the following conditions:

1. A formal review of the life safety plan shall be conducted by the Indian River County Building Division and must be approved prior to issuance of a change of occupancy permit to allow for school use in the existing church building.
2. The maximum student enrollment shall not exceed 70 students.
3. Any future request to increase the student enrollment, add additional grade levels, or to construct new principal use buildings may require additional special exception approvals (PZC review/recommendation and BCC approval).

ATTACHMENTS

1. Location Map
2. Aerial
3. Site Plan
4. Landscape Plan