



MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION & RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

SPECIAL BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING, MAY 12, 2020



TOPICS TO BE COVERED

- Overview of CEQA Process
- Response to Comments
- Questions

OVERVIEW

- Dwayne Mears, PlaceWorks
 - Dwayne is a recognized industry leader in conducting environmental studies for school facilities projects. He has completed CEQA studies for hundreds of new, renovated, and modernized schools over his 30+ years of experience throughout California.

OVERVIEW – FOUR STEPS IN THE CEQA PROCESS

1. Preliminary Review
2. Prepare Initial Study
3. Prepare/Circulate CEQA Document
4. Board Decision whether to approve:
 - CEQA document
 - Project

OVERVIEW – SECOND STEP IN THE CEQA PROCESS

- Prepare Initial Study – 70+ questions, aesthetics to wildfire
- Studies focus on whether impacts are significant and whether mitigation is available
- Studies found the following impacts potentially significant
 - Cultural, paleontological & tribal cultural resources,, and vibration
 - Mitigation measure identified to reduce impacts to less than significant
- Other impacts found less than significant

OVERVIEW – DETERMINING SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

“Less than Significant Impact”

A change in physical conditions that is not substantial.

“Significant Impact”

A substantial or potentially substantial adverse change in physical conditions.

OVERVIEW – THIRD STEP IN THE CEQA PROCESS

- Mitigated Negative Declaration
- Requires 30-day Public Review Process
 - February 20, 2020 to March 30, 2020
- Written Comments from:
 - City of San Diego
 - California Dept of Parks and Recreation
 - Sierra Club North County Coastal Group
 - Procopio Law Firm
 - Play Outside Del Mar
 - 23 Individuals

OVERVIEW – FINAL STEP IN THE CEQA PROCESS

- Board Considers:
 - Approval of CEQA Document
 - Approval of Project
 - Authorizes filing of Notice of Determination

RESPONSE TO COMMENTS – STUDENT CAPACITY

Existing Campus Capacity Based on District Policy

Grade Span	Number of Rooms	Students/Room	Total Students
Kindergarten	3	22	66
1 - 3	10	22	220
4 - 6	9	27	243
Special Ed	2 SDC	15	30
Total			559

Proposed Plan Capacity Based on District Policy

Grade Span	Number of Rooms	Students/Room	Total Students
Kindergarten	3	22	66
1 - 3	9	22	198
4 - 6	9	27	243
Special Ed	2 SDC	15	30
Total			537

- Student capacity is established by District consistent with its educational policies
- Calculated student capacity by state agencies is used for state funding eligibility
- Many comments wrongly assert greater impacts from increased enrollment

RESPONSE TO COMMENTS – FIRE SAFETY COMPARISON

Existing	Proposed Project
No fire hydrants	4 fire hydrants
Closest building is 5 feet from canyon edge	Closest building is 25 feet from canyon edge
Closest classroom is 5 feet from canyon edge	Closest classrooms moved to far eastern edge
Portables composed of combustible materials; buildings have no sprinkler system	2019 California Building Code compliant; building envelope (walls, roofs, eaves, and soffits) would be ignition-resistant, tempered glass, interior sprinkler system
1959-era buildings	City of San Diego Fire Marshall pre-approved buildings
10-foot-wide fire lane, existing bottleneck restrict emergency vehicle access	20-foot-wide fire lane; bottleneck removed
Limited driveway causes congestion	24 ft driveway & 41 ft radii meets San Diego County standards for driveway and turnaround.
	Reduced congestion improves emergency vehicle access and evacuation

RESPONSE TO COMMENTS – FIRE SAFETY COMPARISON



RESPONSE TO COMMENTS – TRANSPORTATION



Queue extends 500 feet into neighborhood

Approximate Queue Lengths

	Existing	Observed Existing Queue	Forecasted Queue	Queue Capacity With Project
Queue Storage Length	317 Ft	800 Ft	700	820 Ft
Vehicle Storage Length	15 Cars	40 Cars	35 Cars	41 Cars

RESPONSE TO COMMENTS – TRANSPORTATION



Queue does not extend beyond campus

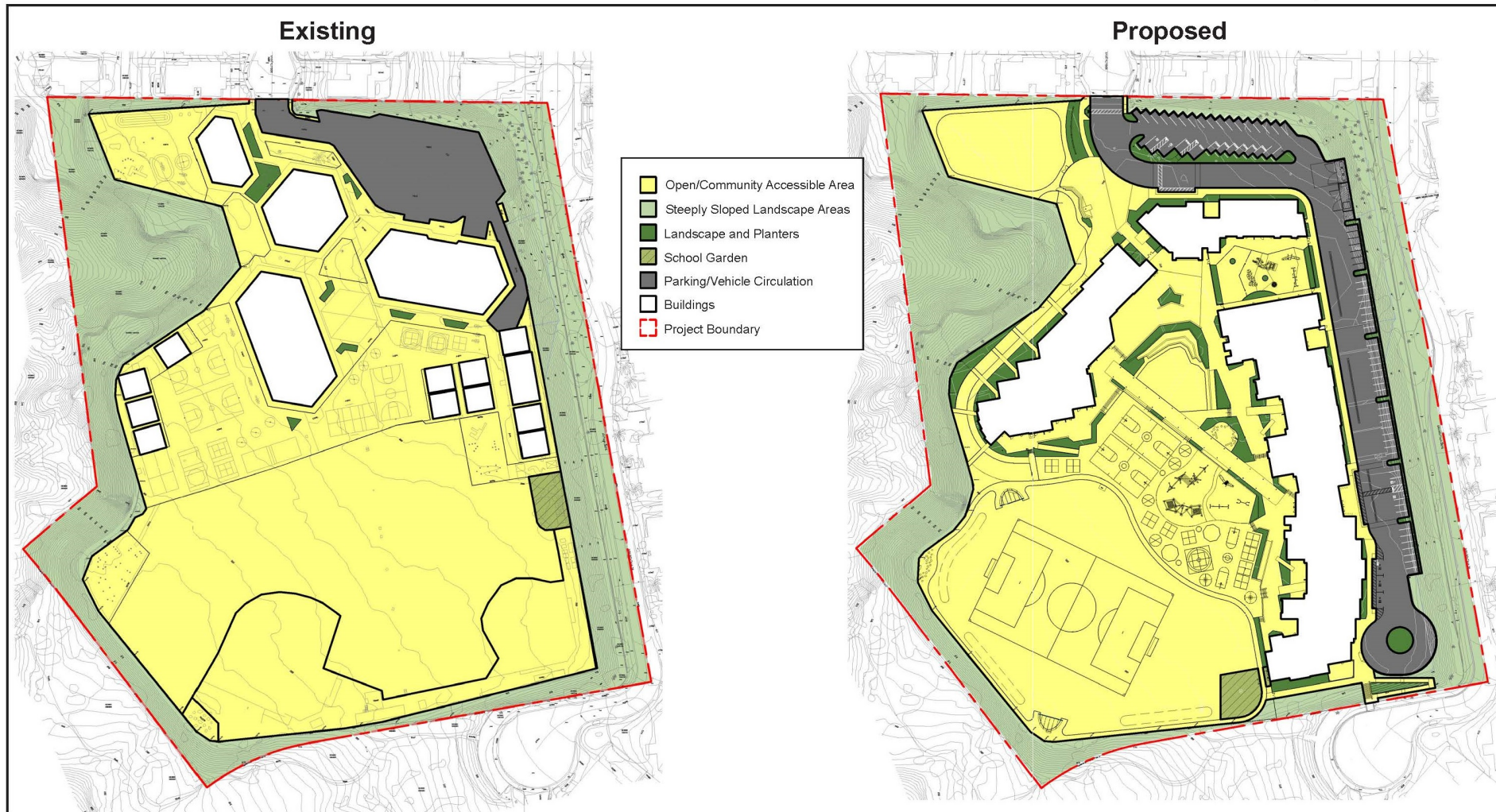
Approximate Queue Lengths

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RESPONSE TO COMMENTS – RECREATION/GREEN SPACE

- Loss of access to recreation space is not a CEQA/environmental issue
- CEQA question is limited to physical environmental impacts
- Public access to site and enhanced amenities remain
- No significant impacts created at other recreation sites

RESPONSE TO COMMENTS – RECREATION/GREEN SPACE



Project provided enhanced amenities

RESPONSE TO COMMENT

- Comments inadvertently omitted
- Attached to Response to Comment document
- Linked with Response to Comment document at www.dmusd.org/Page/8854

From: Kimberly Hiland-Belding <[REDACTED]>
Date: Monday, March 30, 2020 at 4:27 PM
To: Christopher Delehanty <cdelehanty@dmusd.org>
Subject: comment on MND re: Del Mar Heights School Project

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Dear Mr. Delehanty,

Norman Maclean in his non-fiction book, *Young Men and Fire*, analyzes the fire blowup that incinerated smokejumpers during the Mann Gulch Fire. You might consider reading it sometime. 1

The 27' MUR on the edge of the Reserve increases the already steep angle a wind-driven fire would use to approach the school at a tremendous rate of speed. That the MND doesn't even include a Wildfire section is mind-boggling at best and disastrous at worst. This design changes the wind pattern through the school site, and you do the kids (and their families!) a tremendous disservice to not even consider climate change-driven changes to fire. 2

The Del Mar Heights site already has a dangerous number of students on it at present (see May 2016), and building both East Pacific Highlands Ranch and Del Mar Heights at their projected capacities is irresponsible. Particularly because the district knows exactly how the enrollment will shift and would rather save a few bucks and put kids at risk in a too-small high fire risk area rather than return the Del Mar Heights site to its originally-designed population. 3

I also agree that slashing the playfields and blacktop by more than 50% creates a substantial adverse effect on our public resources and community parks. 4

I also agree that changes in parking, traffic, and student population driven by the project will create a substantial adverse effect on community traffic. 5

I also agree a time evacuation study must be done for the sake of the parents, students, staff, and Heights community that would need to evacuate the area. 6

Please confirm receipt.

Thanks,
Kimberly Hiland Belding
DMUSD Parent

Response to Comments from Kimberly Hiland-Belding, dated March 30, 2020

The comment letter from Kimberly Hiland-Belding was inadvertently omitted from the Response to Comments document. As shown below, all comments in this letter were address in the Master Responses. We apologize for the oversight (PlaceWorks).

1. The Board will consider all comments received, including the recommendation to read this book.
2. This is incorrect. Section 3.20, *Wildfire*, begins on page 121 in the Initial Study.
3. Please refer to Master Response 2.1.6, *Transportation/Emergency Access* and Master Response 2.1.6, *Wildfire*, which address the issue of safety and explain that fire hazards would be reduced by the proposed project over existing conditions.
4. Please refer to Master Response 2.1.5, *Recreation/Green Space* for full review of the projects potential impacts on recreation and green space.
5. Please refer to Master Response 2.1.6, *Transportation/Emergency Access* and Master Response 2.1.7, *Wildfire*, for responses to comments about safety conditions at the site. As explained in these responses, the project would enhance safety features over existing conditions.
6. Please refer to Master Response 2.1.6, *Transportation/Emergency Access*. The proposed project would not increase student capacity over current conditions as explained in Master Response 2.1.1, *Project Description*.
7. Please refer to Master Response 2.1.6, *Transportation/Emergency Access*, which explains that the project would enhance safety conditions at the site by reducing congestion and providing an additional lane along the drop-off/pick-up zone.

RESPONSE TO COMMENT – FAIR ARGUMENT

- A Fair Argument Has Not Been Established
- The Project Has Mitigated Any Potentially Significant Effects
- There is No Substantial Evidence the Project Will Have a Significant Environmental Effect
- The Project is Improving Pre-Existing Conditions
- Mitigated Negative Declaration is Appropriate for the Project



QUESTIONS