

FEB 22 2022  
CITY OF ORANGE

TO: City of Orange Planning Department  
DATE: December 8, 2021  
FROM: Timeless Architecture  
PROJECT: St. Verena Multi-Purpose Building  
491 N. Hewes St.  
Orange, CA 92869  
SUBJECT: **Letter of Explanation/Justification**

## **Location of Project**

**1.0** The property in question is located on the southeast corner of N. Hewes Street and Walnut Avenue. This property is zoned R 1-7. To the north, west and south of this property are existing fully established single family residential areas, while the adjacent property to the east is the Spirit and Truth Worship Center. The scale of this project will stay within the envelope for construction established by the City of Orange Planning Ordinance, i.e., the building will not encroach into any of the building setback areas (Building will be 101' from north property line – setback requirement is 20'; building will be 81' from east property line - setback requirement is 20'; building will be 66' from south property line – setback requirement is 5'; building will be 205' from west property line - setback requirement is 20'). The maximum building height of the proposed Multi-Purpose building will be 30' – the maximum height allowable is 32'. The proposed Multi-Purpose building will be constructed all at once – no phasing will be required.

## **Description of Work**

**2.0** The church is proposing to comply with Condition 3 of Resolution No. PC 23-09, which references Conditional Use Permit 2741-08, Conditional Use Permit 2753-09, Minor Site Plan Review 0502-07, and DRC No. 4205-07 by submitting this design for a new two-story multi-purpose building at this time, prior to the construction of the previously approved expansion of the existing church assembly building. The expansion is still to be an intended part of the project in the future and remains a part of the Master Plan, but the proposed Multi-Purpose building will fill a more immediately pressing need of the church for an enclosed athletic and social activities center. The main function of this building is to enclose the existing exterior sports court, and to provide additional classrooms.

**2.1** The proposed Multi-Purpose building will contain a gymnasium with observation spaces (on both the first and second floors), eight Sunday School classrooms, a kitchen, toilets, and multiple storage and other support spaces. The ground floor will have an area of 12,173 s.f., and the second floor will have an area of 5,589 s.f for a total of 17,762 s.f. The new Multi-Purpose building will be constructed of concrete masonry units of a color intended to integrate aesthetically with the existing structures on site. Exposed

sloped sections of roof will be composed of clay tiles to match those on the existing church, and the glazing will be dual-pane 1" insulating glass, also of a color to match that on the existing church. All roof-mounted HVAC equipment will be set back from the perimeter of the building, and will be screened from public view.

**2.2** Removal of all temporary structures will be scheduled prior to starting construction of the multi-purpose building.

**2.3** The existing church building (7,283 s.f.) and existing day care facility (2,863 s.f.) will remain unchanged at this time. The site is essentially flat, as it slopes down less than 2.5 feet in 302 feet from north to south, and less than 1.5 feet in 367 feet from east to west.

### **Hardscaping and Landscaping**

**3.0** The site as it exists is fully landscaped with mature landscaping and trees, as shown on the existing site plan on sheet A010, six of which are within the footprint of the proposed Multi-Purpose building and will need to be removed. New trees will be added to the site to enhance and soften the exterior appearance of the building, and to counter-balance the loss of the few trees that will be removed. New hardscaping will be limited to that necessary to provide required access to the new building. This new hardscaping will be decorative stained concrete stamped with an ashlar pattern, and broom-finished 18" wide borders and ribbons. The existing driveways and parking lot already exist in place. They will remain in place as is, with the exception of re-surfacing and re-striping as necessary to comply with current accessibility codes.

**3.1** Planting and irrigation plans for the proposed new Multi-Purpose Building include additional new planting areas. Shrubs in these areas have been selected for drought tolerance and adaptability to the area. Tree species have been selected for shade in the children's playground area and shade in the parking lot island. Trees have also been selected for minimal root issues. Vines for the proposed 'green screens' have been chosen for their ability to cover the 'green screens' within an acceptable time period and to provide red and white flower colors. The vines chosen do not have root issues. The vine 'green screens' were added to all exterior building walls to soften and add a green texture and flower colors to the building elevations. The hardscape areas have been designed to provide thorough access to all building entrances and exits, with an extra wide plaza at the main entrance.

### **Project Justification**

**4.0** This project will work within the goals and policies established by the Land Use Element within the City of Orange General Plan. Some examples of this are:

- Policy 1.4 - *Ensure that new development reflects existing design standards, qualities, and features that are in context with nearby development.* The new development will fit well with the design of the existing on-site structures.

Nearby development includes an adjacent church building, so the proposed new MPB will simply be another useful ancillary structure without challenging the nature of nearby occupancies.

- Policy 1.6 - *Minimize effects of new development on the privacy and character of surrounding neighborhoods.* Nearby development includes an adjacent church building, so the proposed new MPB will simply be another ancillary structure without challenging the nature of nearby occupancies.
- Policy 2.4 - *Encourage mixed-use projects that contain a variety of compatible uses, and provide necessary supporting public and community facilities.* Adding a Multi-Purpose Building that contains a gymnasium is commonly done by churches as the use is exceptionally compatible, and provides a desirable multi-use building for the church members.
- Policy 2.5 - *Minimize traffic and parking impacts of proposed mixed-use projects.* This proposed facility would impact neither traffic nor parking in this neighborhood, because it would not be in use concurrently with the assembly function of the church – the same persons who attend the church will be the users of the gymnasium/fellowship hall, so the volume of traffic would remain the same – no increase.

**4.1** There is only one company vehicle that is kept on site, and this building will add only one additional employee to the on-site staff. The St. Verena Coptic Orthodox Church has operated at this location in good standing for twenty years (since 2001).

**4.2** The Multi-Purpose building will be used as a gymnasium for athletic events, a fellowship hall for church dinners and similar functions. It will be a private facility used only by the same persons who attend the church, although not concurrently. For this reason, neither traffic, air quality nor water quality will be affected in any way, while noise quality will be substantially improved, as the building will enclose the existing outdoor sport court so that the current outdoor sporting activities will be enclosed by this proposed building. The 8" thick masonry walls will completely dampen the sport court noise.

Respectfully,

Alan Rinderer, Architect  
Timeless Architecture

FEB 22 2022



**Coptic Orthodox Church**  
**Diocese of Los Angeles, Southern California and Hawaii**  
**Saint Verena & The Three Holy Youth Coptic Orthodox Church**  
**Coptic Orthodox Christian Center**



CITY OF ORANGE

August 2, 2021

Planning Department  
City of Orange  
300 E. Chapman Ave.  
Orange, CA 92866

RE: Updated Site Plan Review for enclosed sports' facility

Dear Mr. Vidal Marquez,

The Clergy, Congregation, and Board of St. Verena Coptic Orthodox Church/COCC are pleased to provide this document for the proposed building of an enclosed multipurpose facility at the Coptic Orthodox Christian Center (COCC) located at 491 N. Hewes Street in the City of Orange, California. The purpose of this analysis is to outline the frequency of various service activities and other functions at the center and at the proposed additional facility. The Business Plan will also identify the City's parking requirements and analyze the project's parking demand as well address items previous agreed to with the City of Orange in CUP- 2741-08.

The proposed improvement at the COCC is a spiritual hall building as an addition to the property. The addition is designed to house sports activities, during non-liturgical times, to be built in the south east quadrant of the property. The project also includes landscaping improvements. No changes to the existing 2,850 sq. ft. preschool building or 16,331 sq. ft. current church are proposed at this time.

Per PCR 23-09, item 10, the multi-purpose building will be closed during the Sunday services. Also, use of the building will not exhibit overpopulation/use of the property or its parking and the church will continue its commitment to encouraging parishioners to use only onsite parking.

**The uses and floor areas within the existing buildings and proposed areas are summarized below:**

Existing Church/Hall Building (2 stories) / Phase II (Future Project)

The existing 2,900 sq. ft. church sanctuary contains 228 seats. (In Phase II [CUP 2741-08, CUP 2753-09, Minor Site Plan Review 0502-07, DRC 4205-07], the 1,950 sq. ft. addition and remodel of the existing sanctuary proposes to add 172 seats (in the form of pews-fixed seats) for a total of 400 fixed seats). Phase II will be a future project and is not a part of this proposal.

The remainder of the first floor consists of approximately 4,350 sq. ft. and includes a 1,220 sq. ft. community hall, with ancillary service only kitchen, bathrooms, bookstore and storage facilities. The 2,280 sq. ft. second floor is comprised of an approximate 700 sq. ft. computer room/youth lounge, and four office/conference rooms. (In Phase II the 1,913 sq. ft. addition to the second-floor addition and remodel adds Sunday school rooms, bathrooms and storage)

#### Preschool Building (1 story)

The 2,850 sq. ft. one-story building on the north side of the property is occupied by Clever Endeavors Preschool which has a maximum capacity of 85 children. The preschool has 5 classrooms, 1 office, 5 teachers and 1 director. Hours of operation are Mondays through Fridays from 7:00AM to 6:00PM. There are no changes proposed to this building.

#### Outdoor Patio

The approximate 3,800 sq. ft. outdoor patio includes a BBQ, fire pits, tables with benches, entry arbors, pavers, amphitheater and landscaping.

#### Proposed Multi-Purpose Building

The approximate 17,762 sq. ft. MPB will house sports activities that are currently held in an open space of the property, and Sunday school classrooms, Kitchen, and bathrooms. The enclosed MPB will provide enhanced noise quality to residents around us, safety to our congregants and the community, as well as aesthetic benefits to the property.

This MPB will remain inoperable during all liturgical services as notated in the matrix to follow. Special services (such as weddings, funerals, special celebrations, etc.) are discussed at the end of the Schedule of Services descriptions in the following pages.

The schedule of all weekly church services and events are listed below:

**Coptic Orthodox Christian Center (COCC)  
Schedule of Services**

Sunday	<b>Sanctuary:</b> Divine Liturgy (2 services) Fellowship/Breakfast Youth Meeting <b>Gym:</b> Sports Activities	6:45AM – 11:30AM 12:00PM – 2:00PM 12:00PM – 12:30 PM  1:00PM – 9:00PM
Monday	Closed	
Tuesday	Bible Study - English	7:00PM – 9:00PM
Wednesday	Divine Liturgy	8:00AM – 10:30AM
Thursday	Divine Liturgy	7:30AM – 10:00AM
Friday	Divine Liturgy High School Youth Meeting	8:00AM – 10:30AM 7:30PM – 10PM
Saturday	<b>Gym:</b> Sports Activities Church School <b>Sanctuary:</b> Servants' Meeting Hymns Classes Young Family Meeting Vespers (Prayers) Midnight Praise	9:00AM – 4:00PM 6:00PM – 7:00PM  5:00PM – 6:00PM 5:00PM – 6:00PM 6:00PM – 7:00PM 7:00PM – 8:00PM 8:30PM – 10:00PM



Divine Liturgy Services – Sunday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday mornings

Attended by approximately 15-20 people on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday; approximately 250 people on Sunday. Following Sunday Liturgy Service, all are invited to join in a Fellowship Breakfast until 2 pm, located in the existing fellowship hall within the Sanctuary building.

Youth Meetings – Sunday afternoons

Attended by approximately 50 student- high school and college age youth, most of who are already there with their families attending the Divine Liturgy Service. Youth meetings are held in the Sanctuary while the Fellowship Breakfast is taking place in the existing Fellowship Hall/Patio.

Bible Study – Tuesday evenings

English Bible study is held in the existing Youth Lounge from 7– 8:30 pm which is attended by approximately 20 people

High School Youth Meeting – Friday evenings

Attended by approximately 30 high school youth and held in the existing Youth Lounge/Patio

Midnight Praise –Saturday evenings

Held in the Sanctuary and attended by approximately 20 people.

Servants Meeting – Saturday evenings

Attended by approximately 30 servants who meet in the Youth Lounge.

Hymn Classes - Saturday evenings

Attended by approximately 30 people who meet in the Youth Lounge.

Church School – Saturday evenings

Held in the Youth Lounge/Preschool rooms and Multi-Purpose building and attended by approximately 150 children.

Young Family Meeting/Bible Study – Saturday evenings

Held in the Sanctuary and attended by approximately 15-20 people.

Vespers (Prayers) - Saturday evenings

Held in the Sanctuary and attended by approximately 70- 100 adults and children.

Sports Activities – Saturdays day and Sunday afternoons/evenings

Held on the sports court of the Multi-Purpose building to include basketball, volleyball and other sports activities and attended by approximately 150-200 persons

Special Services and Events are held annually or as needed and include:

During the Great Lent (55 days)

Liturgies during Major Feasts (Nativity, Epiphany, Resurrection)

Holy week (once/year from Palm Sunday to Feast of the Resurrection)



Weddings, Funerals, and various celebrations: by request so not to conflict with regular services. Or large sports events.

Maximum number of persons on the property is 400 persons, therefore, large weddings or funerals will NOT be held concurrent with large sports activities. The schedule will be staggered.

In addition the only time services are held both in the church building and the multi-purpose building is on Saturday evenings. Church school for the children whom their parents are attending Bible study in the church building. They are the same family so there are no extra cars.

Same applied for Sunday Fellowship breakfast, a large number of people in the fellowship hall will be attending the sports event if any are being held.

A parking analysis was completed for the Coptic Orthodox Christian Center to ensure that adequate parking is provided following the proposed expansion. The analysis accounted for the shared peak parking demands at different times of the day, and on different days of the week. Therefore, the actual demand is not the sum of the parking requirements for each land use.

The following table summarizes the City of Orange Parking Requirements for the proposed uses at Coptic Orthodox Christian Center: sq. ft. is based on proposed church expansion completion

\* No facilities will be in use at the same time as Liturgical services such as Vespers or Liturgies, therefore maximum # of parking spaces needed is = to the capacity of the Sanctuary or MPB, whichever is greater.  
Future Phase II (400 persons in the Sanctuary = 133 spaces).  
Proposed MPB (5,728 s.f @ 5.7 sp./1000 s.f. = 33 spaces).

We look forward to continuing our prosperous relationship with the City of Orange, our neighbors and the community at large.

Regards,

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Fr. Gregory Bishay  
Senior Parish Priest  
Vice President , Board of Deacons

cc: The Board of St. Verena Coptic Orthodox Church, C.O.C.C.

Attachment – Schedule of Events by Day and Hour

**Contact:**  
**Georgette Farag**  
**[georgette.farag@gmail.com](mailto:georgette.farag@gmail.com)**

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