

Variance Description Narrative

Proposed Facility

The proposed project is a multi-use athletic building of 36,500 sq.ft. and a 28,000 sq. ft. outdoor turf field to be constructed on the 9th street side of our current school building. The athletic structure will house a basketball/volleyball court, a wrestling room, weight room, sports medicine facility, an indoor turf field, and three class/office/team rooms. The outdoor turf practice field will provide a safe practice area for our soccer, lacrosse, football, track and field, and baseball teams who currently practice offsite. Construction of these facilities will alleviate both safety and financial concerns that threaten the future of Pallotti High School and will enable Pallotti High School to succeed in a very competitive private/Catholic high school environment.

Requested variances

In order to complete this project, Pallotti High School is requesting variances in two areas: green space and setback.

A. Section 20-6.16 Green space requirements.

A-1 The current green space coverage on our property is 160,973 sq. ft. or 55.6%. With the new facility, it will decrease to 129,489 sq. ft. or 44.7%.

A-2. We are proposing to install an artificial turf field. This turf field will constitute approximately 22% of our green space which is not in compliance with the city's "green area" regulations which state that a "passive or active recreation area" may only constitute 10% of green space.

B. Section 20-1.12 Setbacks – On the 9th street side of the building, we are currently proposing a 50 ft. setback as opposed to the 75 ft. required by city regulations.

Reasons for Request in answer to Sec. 20-5.2 (d) of application.

Sec. 20-5.2 (d)

(d) Grant variances from the strict application of this chapter only upon proof by a preponderance of the evidence that:

- 1. By reason of exceptional narrowness, shallowness, or shape of specific parcels of property at the time of the original enactment of this chapter or amendments thereto or by reason of exceptional topographical conditions or other extra-ordinary situations or conditions of specific parcels of property, the strict application of these regulations would result in peculiar or unusual practical difficulties to, or exceptional or undue hardship upon, the owner of such property.**

A-1 St. Vincent Pallotti High School is zoned as R55. This zoning places tight restrictions on greenspace. According to Sec.20-6.16 we are required to maintain a minimum of 65% green space. Currently, we have only 55.6% greenspace. With our proposed facility, we will reduce

that number to 44.7%. Without a variance for green space requirements, any additional construction is impossible.

A-2. According to the City's code on Green Space, a recreational facility such as a turf field can only account for 10% of the green space. As mentioned above, our green space is already out of compliance with R55 zoning. Without a variance for the proposed turf field, we would be unable to build a field that is big enough to serve our needs.

B. According to Sec.20-1.12 the minimum setback for Educational facilities is 75ft. Because of the way that 9th street runs along the backside of our property, our current plans only allow for a 50 ft. setback on corner of the facility closest to Park Hill Ave.

2. Such variance is the minimum reasonable necessary to overcome the aforesaid exceptional conditions.

A-1. In order to accommodate the new building as designed and maintain adequate parking, the variance is the minimum reasonably necessary to overcome the green space regulations.

A-2. In order to construct a turf field that provides space for our teams to safely practice, the variance is the minimum reasonable necessary to overcome the aforesaid exceptional conditions regarding use of green space.

B. In order to accommodate the new facility, the variance is the minimal reasonable necessary to overcome the aforesaid exceptional condition regarding the setback at the northwest side of the building.

3. (3) Such variance can be granted without substantial impairment to the intent, purpose and integrity of the general plan or any duly adopted and approved area master plan affecting the subject property.

These variances can all be implemented without substantial impairment to the intent, purpose and integrity of the general plan or any duly adopted and approved area master plan affecting the subject property. The end result of these changes to our facility will be consistent with current usage of the property and will enhance the appearance of the property, provide adequate parking for the usage, and create a better traffic flow on and around our campus.

4. Such variance will not be detrimental to the use and enjoyment of adjoining or neighboring properties. These provisions, however, shall not permit the board to grant any variance to any setback or yard requirements for property zoned for commercial or industrial purposes when such property abuts or immediately adjoins any property zoned for residential purposes unless such residential property is proposed for commercial or industrial use on an adopted master plan. These provisions shall not be construed to permit the board, under the guise of a variance, to authorize a use of land not otherwise permitted

1-A While the construction of the new facility will lower our green space, the new facility will provide additional recreational area for the community and will provide a better result in terms of waste water management. The property affected by the construction is currently an area where it is difficult to keep grass and therefore experiences erosion issues.

1-B. The construction of a turf field will improve the appearance of the property. It will also allow for proper water management to improve the runoff into the watershed. The field will not change the activities that occur on the property as it is currently used for after school athletic practices.

B. The setback variance will bring the building closer to 9th St. but should have little effect on the community. The overall plan will improve the appearance of our property from the 9th street neighborhood and will help alleviate traffic issues by moving our exit to align with Park Hill Rd.

Additional Information

Pallotti faces the challenge of having no practice fields on our property. Having to transport students or having students transporting themselves to other facilities is a major safety concern, especially in bad weather conditions. Supervision of students and separation from our athletic training staff at off site facilities is always a major concern. Transporting students and renting turf facilities has also proven to be a financial burden for the school.

In addition to not having practice fields on campus, Pallotti High School currently has one gymnasium. This gym serves five basketball teams, the wrestling team and indoor track during the winter sports season. During the spring season, six sports teams rotate practice times during the inclement weather. This situation causes us to have teams practicing late into the evening which is stressful on students, families, and staff.

St. Vincent Pallotti is in a very competitive market. The schools with whom we compete for students are growing constantly. They have large campuses and are building state of the art facilities. These facilities include Science and Engineering labs, athletic facilities, performing arts centers, and restaurant style cafeterias. As these schools grow, they are in need of more students. They are attracting more and more students who would once have been prime candidates for Pallotti High School. Over the last 5 years, enrollment at Pallotti High School has dropped by almost 100 students.

The proposed athletic facility (Phase I) is the first phase of a four-stage plan to better serve our current students and attract students in the future. The facility not only serves the needs of our athletic program, it also opens up possibilities in many other areas of student interest. Moving many of our athletic facilities into the proposed facility enables us to construct a laboratory and maker space for our Robotics and Engineering Department (Phase II). Moving this department will open up classroom space in the main building. This will enable us to make room for a future Performing Arts Center (Phase III) for our Arts Academy students. The Performing Arts Center then enables us to renovate our cafeteria (Phase IV) that currently serves the role of both cafeteria and auditorium.

Pallotti High School has been offering a strong Catholic based education for 100 years. Our goal is return Pallotti to it ideal population of 480-500 students. Our strength is that we offer big school opportunities in a small school environment. However, in order to maintain our strong tradition and to continue serving the Laurel community, Pallotti must be able to compete with the larger schools. In order to accomplish that, we must offer facilities that prospective parents and students believe will enable them to be successful.

This facility will not only serve the high school but will also be a positive asset for the entire Laurel community. Pallotti has always been a willing partner in working with other groups in the community. This facility will provide much needed indoor space for leagues and camps that will serve local children participating in all sports as well as those interested in the Sciences and the Arts. The facility and the

activities it promotes will also attract people from other communities to frequent local business establishments.

The proposed Athletic Center and field are critical to the continued success of St. Vincent Pallotti High School and will have a positive impact on the community as a whole.

We appreciate your consideration,

Jeffrey A. Palumbo

President/Principal

St. Vincent Pallotti High School