REPORT TO PLANNING COMMISSION City of Sacramento

915 I Street, Sacramento, CA 95814-2671

6

PUBLIC HEARING
October 28, 2010

To: Members of the Planning Commission

Subject: City Life Church Special Permit (P10-038)

Project Description: A request to establish a church with approximately 266 seats in the Eastern Star Temple building in the General Commercial zone within the Alhambra Corridor Special Planning District (C-2-SPD).

A. **Environmental Determination:** Categorical Exemption pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15301;

B. **Special Permit** to establish a church within the General Commercial Alhambra Corridor Special Planning District (C-2-SPD).

C. **Variance** to allow a detached sign to be placed within 10 feet of a property line.

Location/Council District:

2719 K Street

Assessor's Parcel Number: 007-0111-015

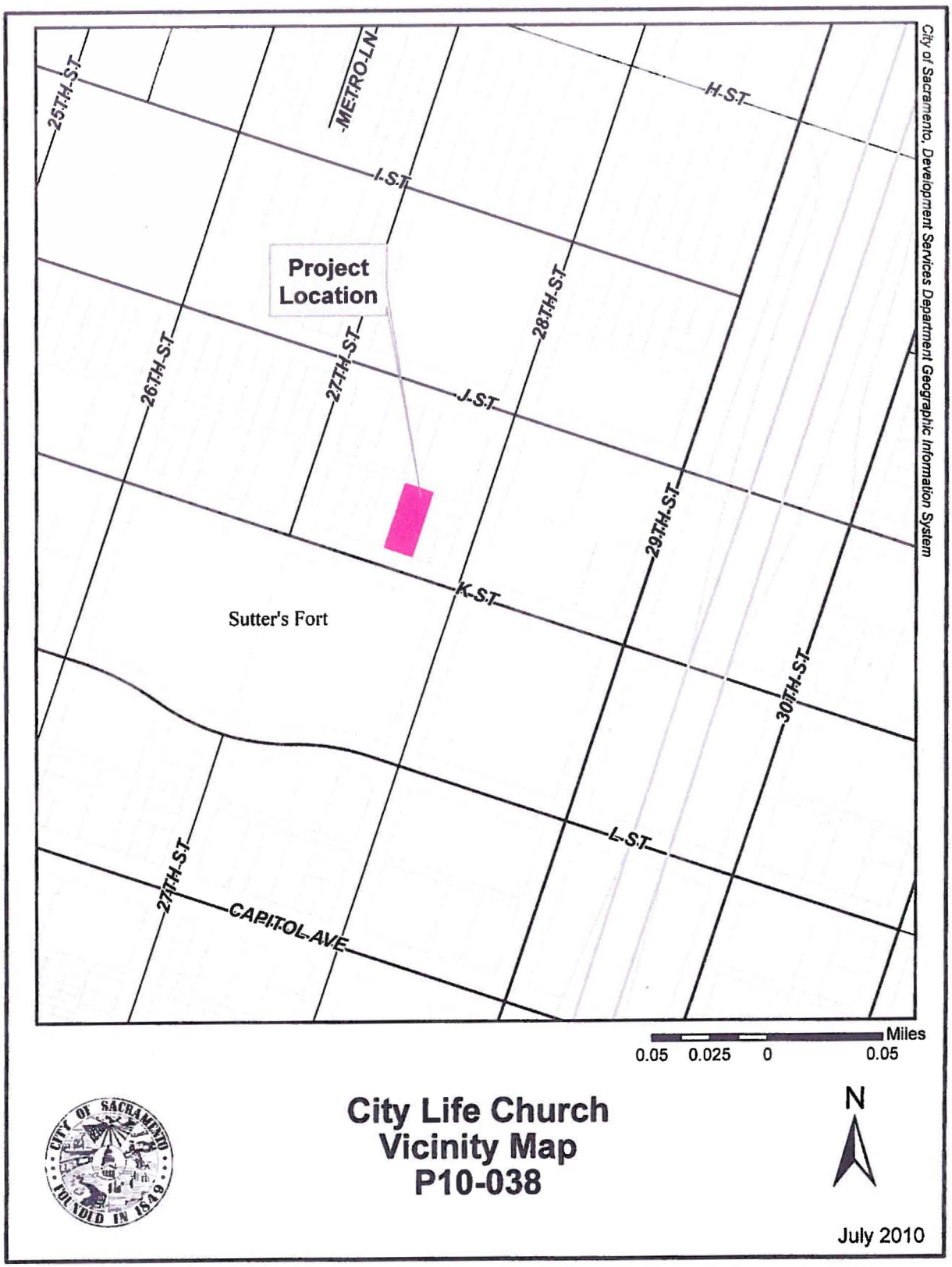
Council District 3

Recommendation: Staff recommends the Commission approve the request based on the findings and subject to the conditions listed in Attachment 1. The Commission has final approval authority over items A, B, and C above and its decision may be appealed to the City Council. At the time of writing this report, there were no outstanding issues and the item is considered to be non-controversial.

Contact: Kimberly Kaufmann-Brisby, Associate Planner, 916-808-5590; Stacia Cosgrove, Senior Planner, 916-808-7110

Applicant: Marc Holland, City Life Church, P.O. Box 189361, Sacramento, CA 95818, 916-712-3344

Owner: Pat Burritt, Eastern Star Hall Association, 2719 K Street, Sacramento, CA 95816, 916-442-4049


25TH ST
METRO LN
H ST
I ST
Project Location
26TH ST
27TH ST
28TH ST
J ST
29TH ST
K ST
Sutter's Fort
30TH ST
L ST
27TH ST
CAPITOL AVE
City of Sacramento, Development Services Department Geographic Information System
Miles
0.05 0.025 0 0.05
N
CITY OF SACRAMENTO FOUNDED IN 1849
City Life Church
Vicinity Map
P10-038
July 2010

Summary: The applicant is requesting a special permit to operate a church in the basement sanctuary of the Eastern Star Temple building. No changes to the building exterior are proposed though an existing sign is located within 10-feet of the front property line for which a variance is requested. Church services and story time will take place on Sundays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Current church attendance for the Sunday services is approximately 60 people.

Other church activities may include seasonal gatherings (Winter Potluck, Ash Wednesday service, Good Friday service, Christmas Eve service, leadership meetings). Typically such events would occur no more frequently than monthly. Future growth may include mid-week religious community meetings averaging 10-15 attendees but not exceeding 50 at any given time.

Though the current Sunday service attendance does not exceed 60 people, the proposal allows for a total of 266 movable seats within the church sanctuary in order to accommodate future growth of the membership. The number of seats was derived in accordance with the occupancy load for the church's lease area, allowing 15 square feet of assembly area per person. The Temple building covers almost the entire site so no on-site parking is available. The members will park on the street or in the nearby public parking lots as well as will utilize public transportation, cycle, or walk to services as many of the congregation live or work within walking distance.

Because the Eastern Star Hall was constructed in 1925, prior to the City adopting parking requirements, and has been used as a social/assembly hall since its construction, no parking is required to be provided per Section 17.64.010(H) of the Zoning Code.

The project is consistent with all applicable policies and staff supports the request. Staff notified all property owners within a 500 radius of the project site regarding this public hearing and has received no opposition from the surrounding neighborhood or neighborhood groups. **The project is not considered to be controversial.**

Table 1: Project Information
General Plan designation: Urban Corridor Low
Existing zoning: General Commercial Alhambra Corridor Special Planning District (C-2-SPD)
Existing use of site: Eastern Star Temple-assembly hall
Property area: 0.26 acres, 11,326 square feet

Background Information: The proposed church is located in the basement sanctuary of the Eastern Star Temple. The building was constructed in 1925 and has been in use continuously for meetings of the Order of the Eastern Star, as well as for dances, receptions, and other quasi-public assembly related activities since construction was completed. The temple building was added to the National Register of Historic Places, building #92001757, in 1993. The architectural style is Romanesque and was designed

by Frederick J. Gould of Coffman, Salsbury, & Stafford. In order for work to be done to repair a crack in the front façade, the Preservation Director approved an application to repair the crack on January 9, 2009, (PB08-088). Additional research revealed no additional entitlement requests for the project site.

Public/Neighborhood Outreach and Comments: Prior to the filing of the special permit application the applicant conducted substantial neighborhood outreach to area neighborhood associations and businesses. The proposal received no negative feedback regarding the church proposal but did receive letters of support which are included as Attachment 4.

After receipt of the application, Early Project Notification was sent to the Boulevard Park Neighborhood Association, the Marshall School New Era Park Neighborhood Association, and the Midtown Neighborhood Association. Just one response to the Early Project Notification was received by staff which is in support of the proposal and is also included as Attachment 4. A public notice was sent notifying all property owners within a 500 radius of the project site regarding this public hearing and staff posted the site with a public notice. To date, no comments regarding the project have been received by staff.

Environmental Considerations: The Community Development Department, Environmental Planning Services Division has reviewed this project and determined that this is exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Section 15301, Existing Facilities. The project consists of the operation of a private structure, involving no expansion of use beyond that which is existing.

Policy Considerations:

The 2030 General Plan land use designation for the project site is Urban Corridor Low Density. The site is zoned General Commercial within the Alhambra Corridor Special Planning District (C-2-SPD). The proposed church use is allowed with the approval of a special permit in any zone (Section 17.24.030, footnote 5).

The project is consistent with the Urban Corridor Low Density land use designation in that the church use is a component of a complete and well-structured neighborhood as defined in the 2030 General Plan (pg. 2-16). Also, the Urban Corridor Low Density designation includes multi-story structures and more intense uses at major intersections, lower intensity uses adjacent to neighborhoods, and access to transit service throughout. The designation allows for a mix of horizontal and vertical mixed-use development and single-use commercial and residential development that includes compatible public and quasi-public, and special uses, which would include the church use.

The church would be housed within the three story Eastern star Temple building. Currently, a modern dance academy "Stomp" holds classes in the basement and dances in the third floor ballroom. Also, the building is leased out for various social functions and gatherings throughout the year.

The church currently leases the basement area as well as classrooms on the first, second, and third floors. The church use may have associated church support services such as a nursery and Sunday school located in the classrooms on the first, second, and eventually the third floors. The quasi-public church use is consistent with the land use designation and the use is compatible with the adjacent uses comprising office, commercial, state park (Sutter's Fort), and a single residence to the east of the building.

The Alhambra Corridor Special Planning District area consists of properties located between 26th and 34th streets from the Southern Pacific railroad mainline levee to the W/X freeway. The district is intended to assist in the preservation of the neighborhood scale and character along with providing additional housing opportunities in the area. There are no special restrictions for the church use in the Special Planning District.

The proposed church use is consistent with the following goals of the Alhambra Corridor Planning District:

- Maintain and improve the character, quality, and vitality of individual neighborhoods;

- Provide the opportunity for a balanced mixture of uses in neighborhoods adjacent to transit facilities and transportation corridors

2030 General Plan:

The 2030 General Plan designates the subject parcel as Urban Corridor Low Density. The proposal is consistent with the following General Plan policies:

- Neighborhoods as a Basic Unit. Recognizing that Sacramento's neighborhoods are the basic living environments that make-up the city's urban fabric, the City shall strive through its planning and urban design to preserve and enhance their distinctiveness, identity, and livability from the downtown core to well integrated new growth areas (LU2.1.1).

- Complete and Well-Structured Neighborhoods. The City shall promote the design of complete and well-structured neighborhoods whose physical layout and land use mix promote walking to services, biking, and transit use; foster community pride; enhance neighborhood identity; ensure public safety; are family-friendly and address the needs of all ages and abilities (LU 2.1.3).

The addition of the church use in the Eastern Star Temple building would contribute to the complete and well-structured neighborhood and would preserve the distinct identity and livability of Midtown. The Eastern Star Temple is a landmark structure and is proximate to where many of the churches' members and regular attendees reside or do business. By operating the church within the temple, the church is contributing to the overall quality of life and sustainability of the neighborhood by supporting the ongoing use and maintenance of the historic building in a manner that is closely aligned to that of its original social/assembly related use.

The building's central location within Midtown is well served by transit and has excellent pedestrian and bicycle access from the surrounding neighborhood and other parts of the city. Thus, the impact of the churches' Sunday morning operations would be minimized by the diverse transportation options available to current and future attendees.

Smart Growth Planning Principles:

"Smart Growth" is a term coined by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) as an umbrella term for the many initiatives intended to address some of the negative consequences of urban sprawl. Smart Growth generally occurs when development patterns are sustainable and balanced in terms of economic objective, social goals, and use of environmental/natural resources. The following Smart Growth principle applies to the proposed project:

- Promote distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place, including the rehabilitation and use of historic buildings.

The proposed project has been designed to incorporate the Smart Growth principle noted above.

Land Use

Special Permit

The applicant proposes to establish a 266 seat house of worship in an existing social/assembly hall building, which requires approval of a special permit per Section 17.24.030, footnote 5 of the Zoning Code.

The City's Zoning Code, Section 17.212.010, specifies the findings required for the approval of the special permit. In evaluating special permit proposals of this type, the Commission is required to make the following findings:

A. A special permit shall be granted upon sound principles of land use.

The project is consistent with the Urban Corridor Low Density land use designation in that the church use is a component of a complete and well-structured neighborhood as defined in the 2030 General Plan (pg. 2-16). The designation allows for a mix of horizontal and vertical mixed-use development and single-use commercial and residential development that includes compatible public and quasi-public, and special uses, which would include the church use.

B. A special permit shall not be granted if it will be detrimental to the public health, safety or welfare, or if it results in the creation of a nuisance.

The project, as conditioned, will not be detrimental to the public welfare nor result in the creation of a public nuisance in that the Eastern Star Temple is centrally located within

Midtown and is well served by transit and has excellent pedestrian and bicycle access from the surrounding neighborhood and other parts of the city. Adequate on-street parking is also available so the impact of the churches' Sunday morning operations on parking and traffic would be minimized by the diverse transportation options available to current and future attendees.

C. The special permit use must comply with the objectives of the general or specific plan for the area in which it is to be located.

The addition of the church use in the Eastern Star Temple building would contribute to the complete and well-structured neighborhood and would preserve the distinct identity and livability of Midtown. The Eastern Star Temple is centrally located in Midtown and is proximate to where many of the churches' members and regular attendees reside or do business and is well-served by public transit. By operating the church within the temple, the church is contributing to the overall quality of life and sustainability of the neighborhood by supporting the ongoing use and maintenance of an historic building in a manner that is closely aligned to that of its original social/assembly related use.

Variance

The church currently has a detached sign located on the east side of the building's grand entrance in a planter which is within 10-feet of the property line. Section 15.148.350 of the Sign Code requires detached signs to be located at least ten (10) feet from any property line so a variance is needed for the sign to remain in its current location. The church's sign location mirrors that of the Eastern Star Temple's sign in terms of distance from the front property line and location within the Temple building's landscape area behind the public sidewalk.

The City's Sign Code, Section 15.148.1040, states the planning commission may grant a variance when the following is shown:

A. That exceptional or extraordinary circumstances or conditions apply to the case referred to in the application that do not apply generally in the same district and the enforcement of the regulations of this article would have an unduly harsh result upon the utilization of the subject property;

Exceptional or extraordinary circumstances or conditions apply that do not apply generally in the same district and the enforcement of the regulations of the Sign Code would have an unduly harsh result upon the utilization of the subject property in that due to the urban nature of the Midtown area, where buildings engage the street with minimized setback requirements, it is necessary for detached signs to be placed closer to the property line as there is no other area in which the signs may be placed.

B. That the variance will not result in a special privilege to one individual property owner and that the variance would be appropriate for any property owner facing similar circumstances;

No special privilege is being extended to one individual property owner in that the variance would be appropriate for any owner facing similar circumstances because the historic places designation limits the signage options available. The church has attempted to mirror the location and design of the Temple building's existing sign to achieve an aesthetic balance so it is necessary for the sign to be located closer than 10-feet to the property line, just as is the existing sign.

C. That the requested variance will not materially and adversely affect the health and safety of persons residing or working in the neighborhood, and will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to property and improvements in the neighborhood.

The requested variance will not materially and adversely affect the health and safety of persons residing or working in the neighborhood, and will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to property and improvements in the neighborhood in that by locating the sign in the planter the sign will not impeded pedestrians or obscure motorist's views. Also, the size of the detached sign is in scale with, and complements the design of the building.

Staff believes that the sign complies with the purpose of the sign code in that the design and location of the sign will not be a potential hazard to motorists and pedestrians, and will work harmoniously with the appearance of the historic Eastern Star Temple building.

Access, Circulation, and Parking

The site has good access to local, arterial, and regional roadways. There are 252 on-street parking spaces within one- and-a-half blocks of the Eastern Star Temple. A recent inventory of parking spaces conducted by City Life Church volunteers showed on a typical Sunday, between the hours of 10 a.m. and noon, at least 55 of those spaces were open and available for use.

Approximately forty-nine percent of the City Life attendees live within walking or cycling distance of the church and many do walk or cycle to Sunday services. On-street bicycle lanes are included on 28th and K streets. Surrounding streets are also conducive to bicycling and walking with adequate street and sidewalk widths to accommodate cyclists and pedestrians, respectively. Secure bicycle parking is provided in the building basement near the sanctuary.

Transit services are available including bus lines on J, L, 29th, and 30th streets as well as on Alhambra Boulevard. The 28th and R streets light rail station is located less than one-half mile from the church.

No changes are proposed to the existing landscaping and no attached signage is proposed with this application. However, the project will be conditioned to modify the church's existing detached sign so it more closely mirrors the original building sign in design, color, and materials as well as complies with the City's Sign Ordinance.

Conclusion:

Because the church use is consistent with the 2030 General Plan, will be a positive contribution to a complete and well-structured neighborhood, and would contribute to preserve the distinct identity and livability of Midtown staff is in support of the proposal and recommends the Commission approve items A through C.

Respectfully submitted by: _____

KIMBERLY KAUFMANN-BRISBY
Associate Planner

Approved by: _____

STACIA COSGROVE
Senior Planner

Recommendation Approved:

_____

GREGORY BITTER, AICP
Principal Planner

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Attachment 1
City Planning Commission Record of Decision
Recommended Findings of Fact
City Life Church (P10-038)

Findings of Fact

A. Environmental Determination: Categorically Exempt

Based on the determination and recommendation of the City's Environmental Planning Services Manager and the oral and documentary evidence received at the hearing on the Project, the Planning Commission finds that the Project is exempt from review under Section **15301, Existing Facilities** of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines as follows:

The project consists of the operation of a private structure, involving no expansion of use beyond that which is existing.

B. The **Special Permit** to establish a church within the General Commercial Alhambra Corridor Special planning district (C-2-SPD) is approved subject to the following Findings of Fact :

1. The granting of the special permit is based upon sound principles of land use in that the project is consistent with the Urban Corridor Low Density land use designation because the church use is a component of a complete and well-structured neighborhood and the designation allows for a mix of horizontal and vertical mixed-use development and single-use commercial and residential development that includes compatible public and quasi-public, and special uses, which would include the church use.

2. The project, as conditioned, will not be detrimental to the public welfare nor result in the creation of a public nuisance in that the Eastern Star Temple is centrally located within Midtown and is well served by transit and has excellent pedestrian and bicycle access from the surrounding neighborhood and other parts of the city. Adequate on-street parking is also available so the impact of the churches' Sunday morning operations on parking and traffic would be minimized by the diverse transportation options available to current and future attendees.

3. The church use complies the objectives of the General Plan and the Alhambra Corridor Special Planning District in that the addition of the church use in the Eastern Star Temple building would contribute to the complete and well-structured neighborhood and would preserve the

distinct identity and livability of Midtown. By operating the church within the temple, the church is contributing to the overall quality of life and sustainability of the neighborhood by supporting the ongoing use and maintenance of an historic building in a manner that is closely aligned to that of its original social/assembly related use.

C. The **Variance** to allow a detached sign to be placed within 10 feet of a property line is approved subject to the following Findings of Fact:

1. Exceptional or extraordinary circumstances or conditions apply that do not apply generally in the same district and the enforcement of the regulations of the Sign Code would have an unduly harsh result upon the utilization of the subject property in that due to the urban nature of the Midtown area, where buildings engage the street with minimized setback requirements, it is necessary for detached signs to be placed closer to the property line as there is no other area in which the signs may be placed.

2. No special privilege is being extended to one individual property owner in that the variance would be appropriate for any owner facing similar circumstances because the historic places designation limits the signage options available. The church has attempted to mirror the location and design of the Temple building's existing sign to achieve an aesthetic balance so it is necessary for the sign to be located closer than 10-feet to the property line, just as is the existing sign.

3. The requested variance will not materially and adversely affect the health and safety of persons residing or working in the neighborhood, and will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to property and improvements in the neighborhood in that by locating the sign in the planter the sign will not impeded pedestrians or obscure motorist's views. Also, the size of the detached sign is in scale with and complements the design of the building.

B. Special Permit: The **Special Permit** to establish a church within the General Commercial Alhambra Corridor Special Planning District (C-2-SPD) is approved subject to the following conditions of approval:

General

B1. The project shall substantially conform to the approved plans as shown on the attached exhibits (Exhibits 1A-1D) and as conditioned to be revised. Any modification to the project shall be subject to review and approval by planning staff (and may require additional entitlements).

B2. The hours of operation will be from 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. on weekdays and 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. on weekends. Any modification to the hours of operation shall be subject to review by Current Planning staff and may require additional planning entitlements.

B3. The project signage shall comply with the City's Sign Ordinance (Chapter 15) and Historic Preservation requirements.

B4. A maximum of 266 auditorium seats are approved with this application.

B5. The use of amplified sound out-of-doors is not allowed.

Department of Transportation-Development Engineering

B6. The applicant shall repair or reconstruct any deteriorated portions of the existing sidewalk fronting the property along K Street per City standards and to the satisfaction of the Department of Transportation.

Building Division

Advisories:

1. Should any work requiring a building permit be proposed, the applicant shall provide plans stamped and wet-sealed by a licensed architect or engineer.

2. Should any work requiring a building permit be proposed, the applicant shall make accessible upgrades as required by the most current version of the California Building Code.

C. Variance: The **Variance** to allow a detached sign to be placed within 10 feet of a property line is approved subject to the following conditions of approval:

C1. The project signage shall comply with the City's Sign Ordinance (Chapter 15) and Historic Preservation requirements.

C2. The applicant shall submit revised drawing for the City Life Church's sign which mirror the existing Eastern Star Temple sign in design and materials for review and approval by Historic Preservation then shall revise the sign accordingly, acquiring any required permits prior to construction of the sign.

Exhibit B-1 Title Sheet

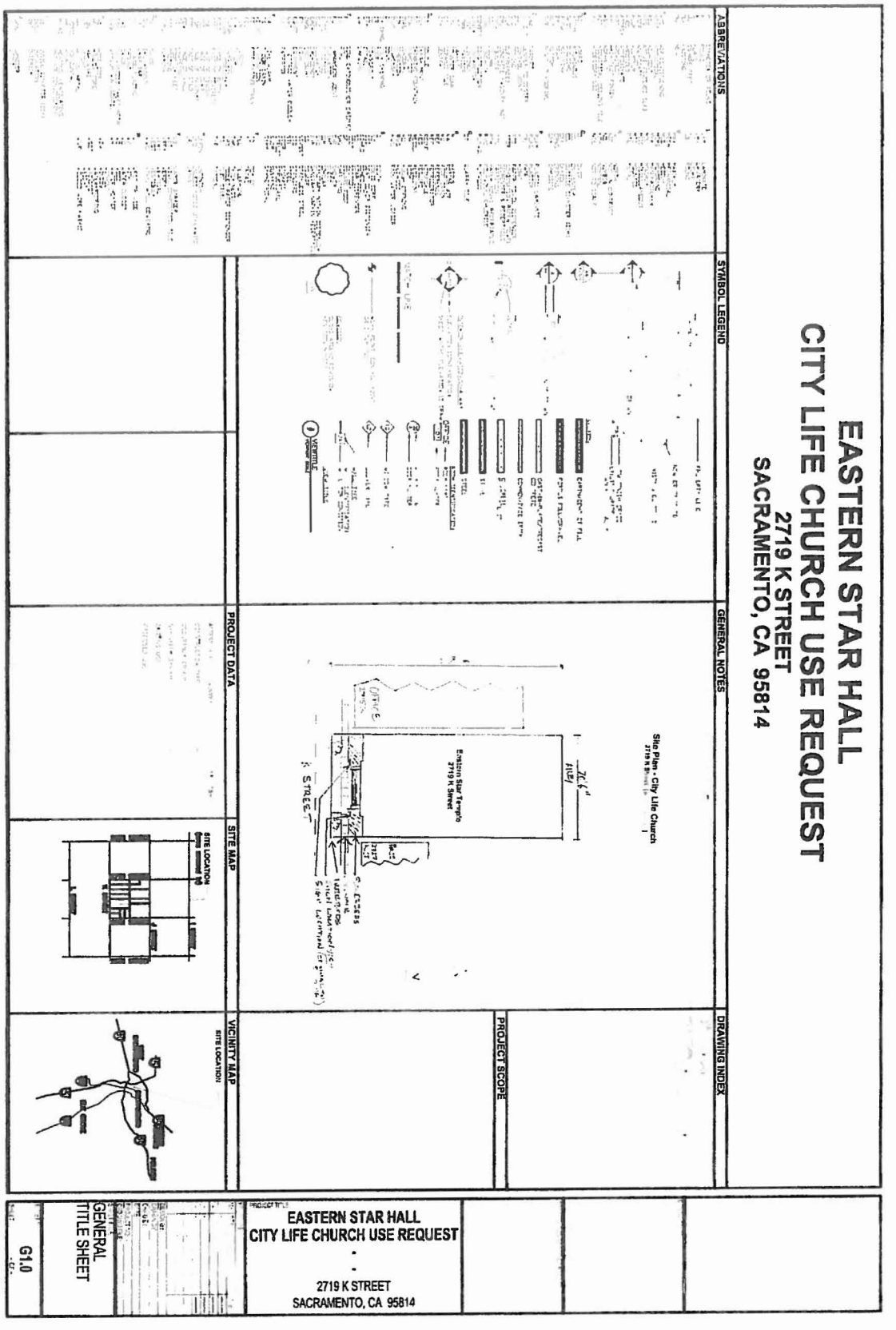


Exhibit B-2 Basement and First Floor Plans

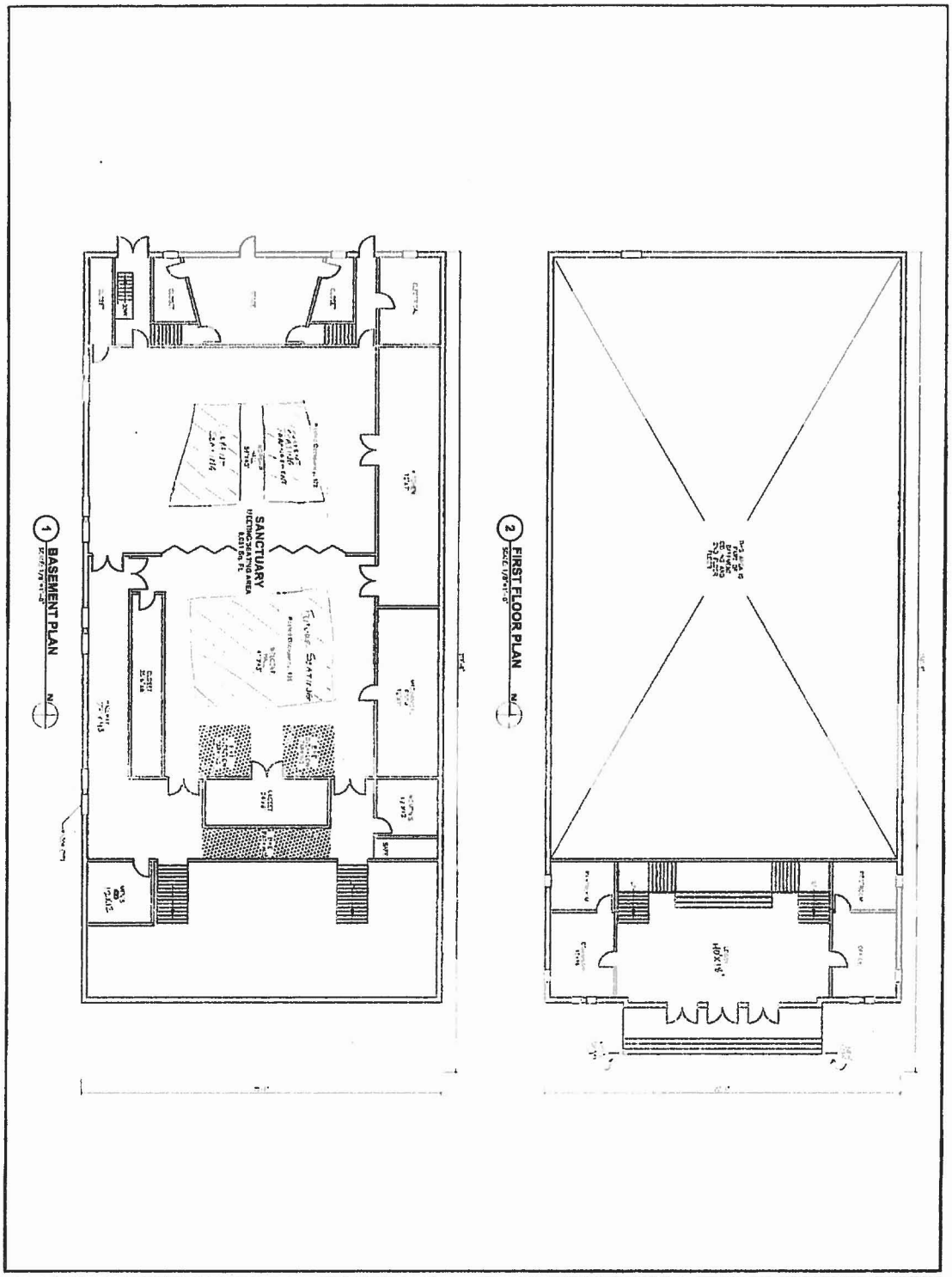


Exhibit B-3 Second and Third Floor Plans

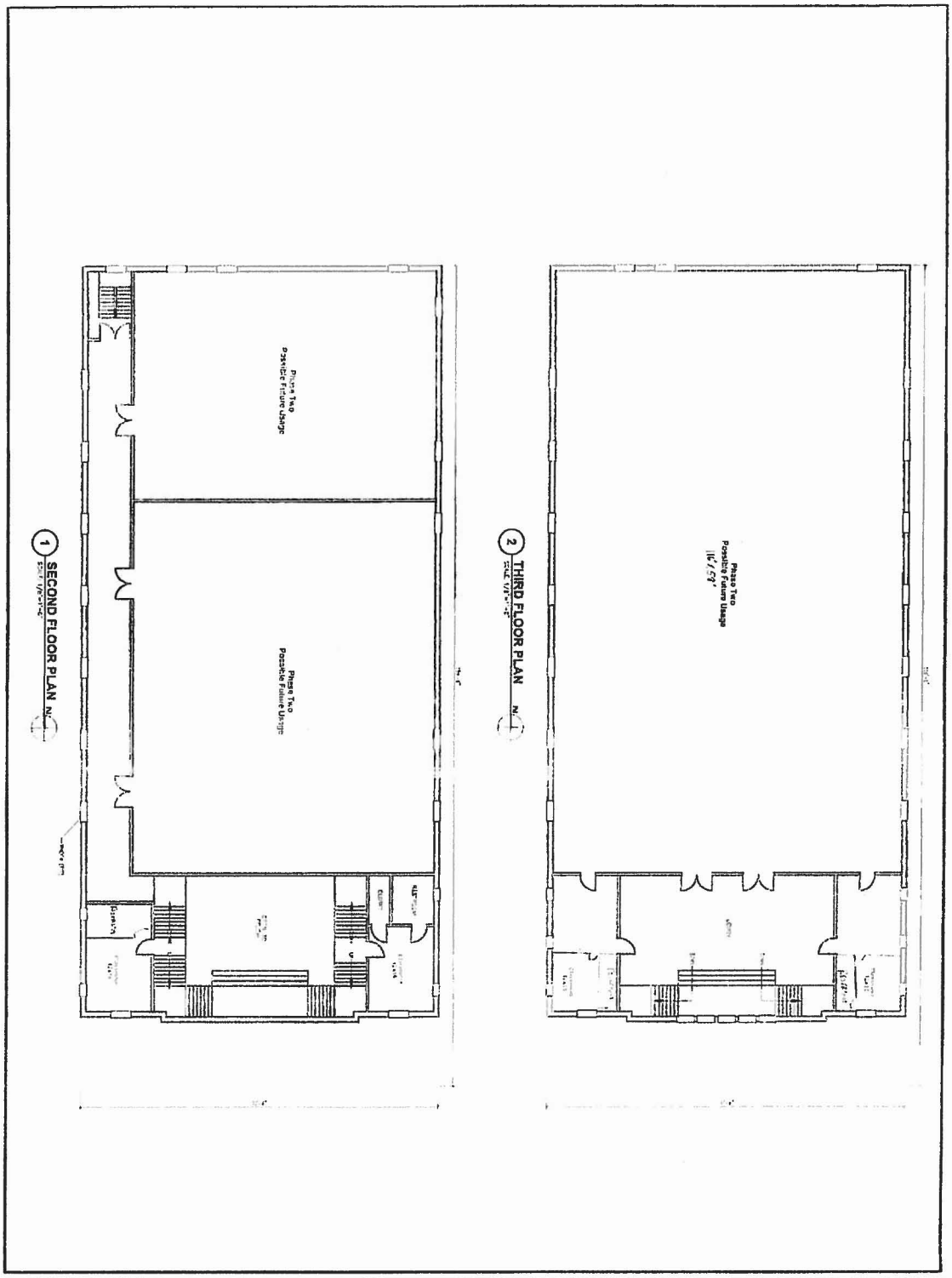
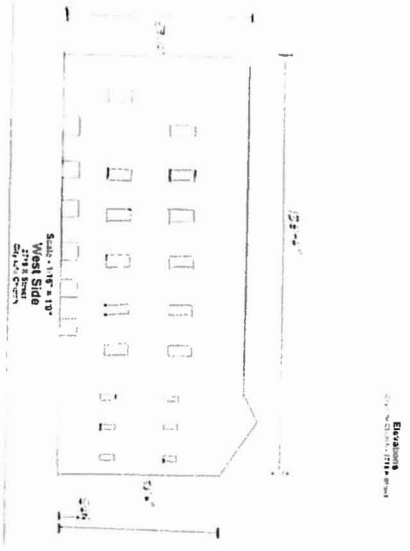
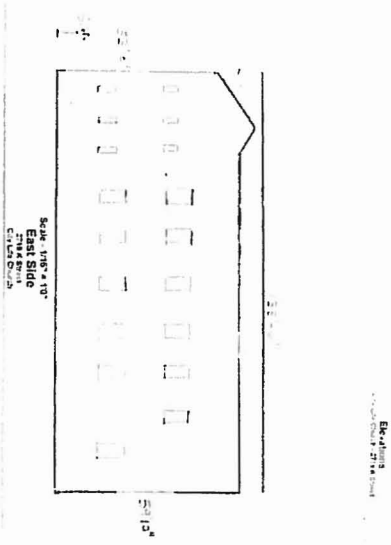
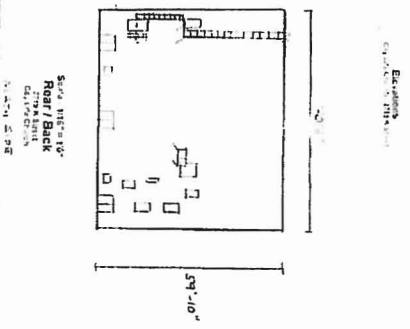
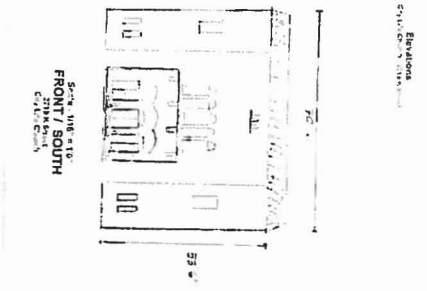


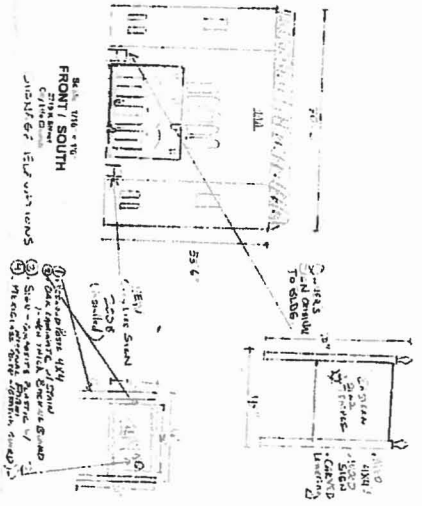
Exhibit B-4 Elevations





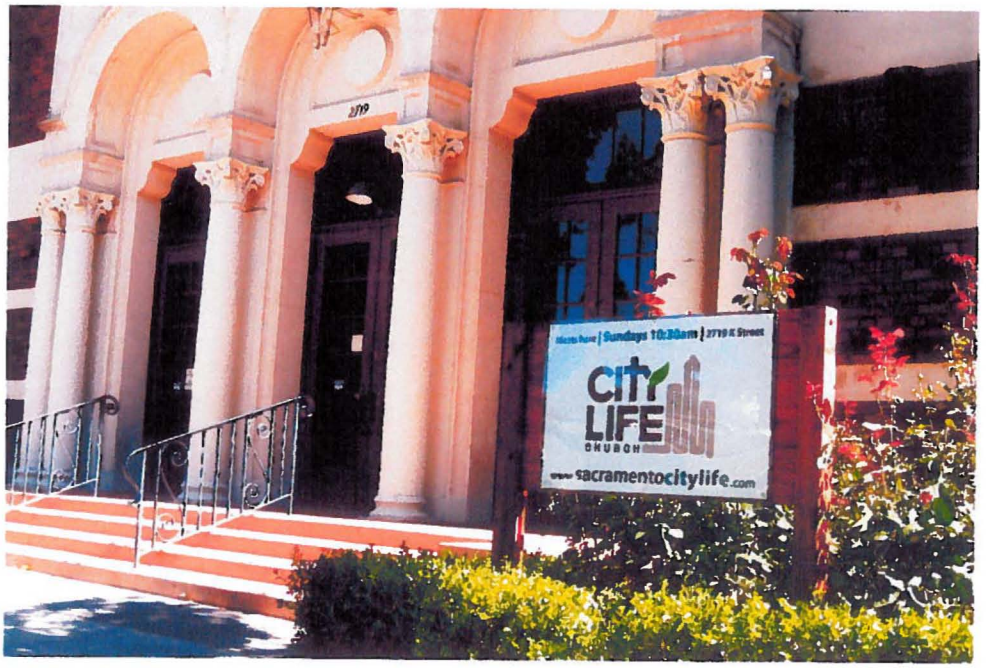






Attachment 2 – Eastern Star Temple Building Photographs

Front/ K Street/ South Side
Sunday AM

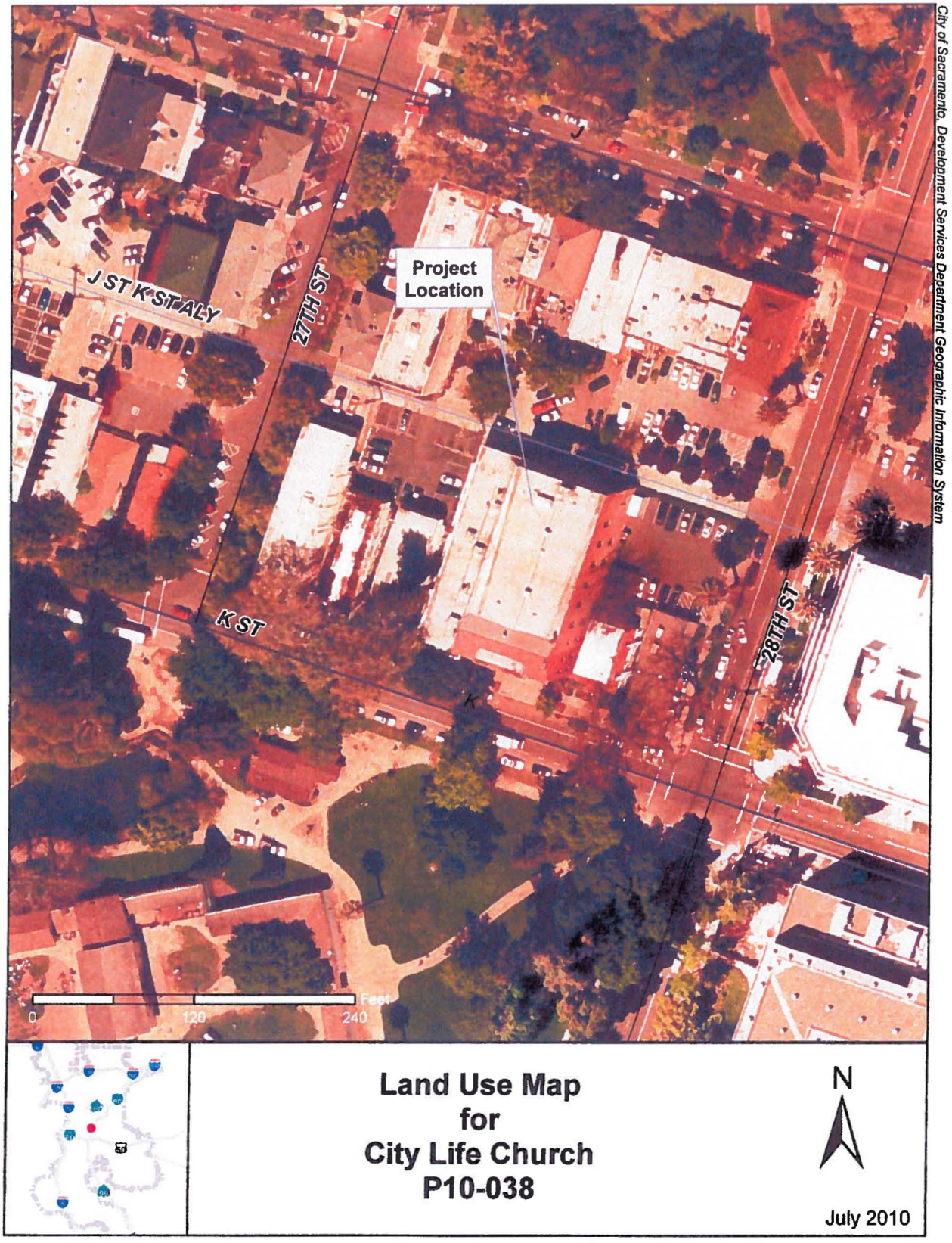


Front/ K Street/ Entrance
Sunday AM

East Neighbor - 2727 K Street
Sunday AM

West Neighbor - 2715 K STreet
Sunday AM

Attachment 3 – Land Use and Zoning Map



Attachment 4 – Project Letters of Support

P10-038
07/01/2010

Midtown Neighborhood Association
Formerly the Winn Park/Capitol Avenue
Neighborhood Association
P.O. Box 162555
Sacramento, CA 95816-2555
www.sacmidtown.org

Matt Piner
Chair
Bruce Holmes
Vice Chair
Margaret Piner
Treasurer
Bill Burg
Secretary

Vivian Gerlach
Terry Strike
Barbara Steinberg
Members-at-Large

Karen Jacques
Member Emeritus

City of Sacramento
Planning Department
300 Richards Blvd.
Sacramento, CA

June 15, 2010

Dear Planner and to Whom it Concerns:

On Wed. June 9, Reverend Marc Holland attended our MNA Board Meeting to discuss City Life Church and its pursuit of permits and approvals for meeting at 2719 K Street (The Easter Star Temple Building).
We discussed impacts that Sunday meetings would have since the building has no dedicated parking. There is a concern in our neighborhood due to the large number of churches in the general area (St. Francis, Pioneer/Spiritual Life Center, Trinity, Center of Praise, etc.) and the competition for on-street parking between these Sunday Church goers and residents. For City Life, since the area is largely non-residential and across from a 2-block State Park (Sutter's Fort) - and since it was stated that a large percentage of the relatively small congregation walks or rides bicycles to church – we felt the impact of this particular use would not be significant. We also discussed the importance of the Church coordinating its other scheduled events with the Eastern Star Temple and its other tenants and that the Church could seek cooperative use agreements with nearby parking facilities to help alleviate on-street parking, especially in winter months and during inclement weather.
We greatly appreciate Revered Marc's outreach and have received ample and satisfactory communication from them in order to understand the nature of their organization. We can affirm that they are becoming a valuable player in the landscape of the midtown/downtown community, and that their activities are inclined towards the betterment of our city as a whole. We perceive no negative community impact from the activities they are involved in at the proposed location and are further supportive of this group as a viable tenant for the Eastern Star Temple Building, a valued and beautiful historic resource.

On behalf of the Midtown Neighborhood Association, I provide this statement of full support and look forward to working side-by-side with City Life Church as we endeavor to foster a thriving midtown community.

Best Regards,

Matthew Piner
Board Chair
916-444-7115 pinerworks@sbcglobal.net

June 24, 2010

From: Mona Larian
Owner, Blimpie Sub & Salads
2731 K Street
Sacramento, CA 95816

To Whom it Concerns,

The undersigned confirm support of the current application by City Life towards using the facility at 2719 K Street for their worship meetings every Sunday and occasional community events and activities at various times.

Reverend Marc Holland met with me to talk about City Life Church's pursuit of a permit to find out any concerns my organization might have.

We have received ample and satisfactory communication from them in order to understand the nature of their organization. We can affirm that they are becoming a valuable partner in the landscape of the midtown/downtown community, and that their activities are inclined towards the betterment of our city as a whole. We perceive no negative community impact from the activities they are and will be engaged in at the proposed location.

I provide this statement of full support. I look forward to partnering with City Life Church as we endeavor to foster a thriving midtown community.

Mona Larian

Owner, Blimpie Sub & Salads

Kimberly Kaufmann-Brisby

From: Turrill, Catherine L [sac16712@saclink.csus.edu]
Sent: Tuesday, July 20, 2010 11:27 PM
To: Kimberly Kaufmann-Brisby
Subject: RE: Project Routing packet-City Life Church-P10-038

Dear Kimberly,
I have shared that information with SOCA members and so far everyone is in favor--I think the hope is that this additional usage will help the building!
SOCA holds its monthly meeting at the Eastern Star building, hence my decision to let its members know the topic had come up.
Best,
Catherine

Professor Catherine Turrill
Assistant Chair, Art Department
California State University, Sacramento
Office: 194 Kadema Hall
Phone: 916.278-5786
Fax: 916.278-7287
URL: http://www.al.csus.edu/art/

From: Kimberly Kaufmann-Brisby [KKBrisby@cityofsacramento.org]
Sent: Monday, July 19, 2010 12:58 PM
To: Ed Short; Steve Cohn; Sue Brown; David Kwong; Gregory Bitter; Zarah Bringas; Jennifer Hageman; Susanne Cook; Derrick LIM; Janine Martindale; 'rconstantino@cityofsacramento.org'; Pamela Morgan; 'policeplanreview@cityofsacramento:org'; Stacia Cosgrove; Roberta Deering; Robert Armijo; Pat Oneil; Howard Chan; 'turrillc@csus.edu'; 'georgeraya@yahoo.com'; 'sacmidtown@gmail.com'; Kimberly Kaufmann-Brisby
Subject: Project Routing packet-City Life Church-P10-038

Good afternoon,

I have attached the project routing packet and plans for your review and comment. The project will go to our in-house review committee-MRC, next Tuesday-July 27. The project is pretty straightforward. The church is currently operating without the benefit of a special permit and so is now requesting the special permit to allow it to continue functioning in the historic Eastern Star Temple building-across from Sutter's Fort. FYI-the church's current membership numbers approximately 50 members but has requested approval for the building capacity of 305 members anticipating the possibility of future growth.

Finally, because the church is located in an operating assembly-type building, the parking credits associated with the assembly use apply to the proposed use so no parking is proposed to be waived.

I appreciate your time, attention, and assistance with this project.

Cordially,

Kimberly

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