



# REPORT TO PLANNING COMMISSION City of Sacramento

# 8

915 I Street, Sacramento, CA 95814-2671

**PUBLIC HEARING**  
**February 10, 2011**

To: Members of the Planning Commission

**Subject: Sacred Heart Parish School Sign Variance (P10-076)**

A request to allow a 39 square-foot constructed monument sign to deviate from setback and size requirement and a 33 square-foot constructed attached sign to exceed maximum size allowed on a 2.56-acre school site in the Single-Family Alternative (R-1A) zone.

- A. Environmental Determination: Exempt (CEQA Guidelines Section 15311);
- B. Variance to allow a detached monument sign to be located less than ten (10) feet from the edge of a driveway entrance;
- C. Variance to allow a detached monument sign to exceed the maximum size allowed in the R-1A zone;
- D. Variance to allow an attached sign to exceed the maximum size allowed in the R-1A zone;

**Location/Council District:**

856 39<sup>th</sup> Street, Sacramento, CA

Assessor's Parcel Number 008-0032-047

Council District 3

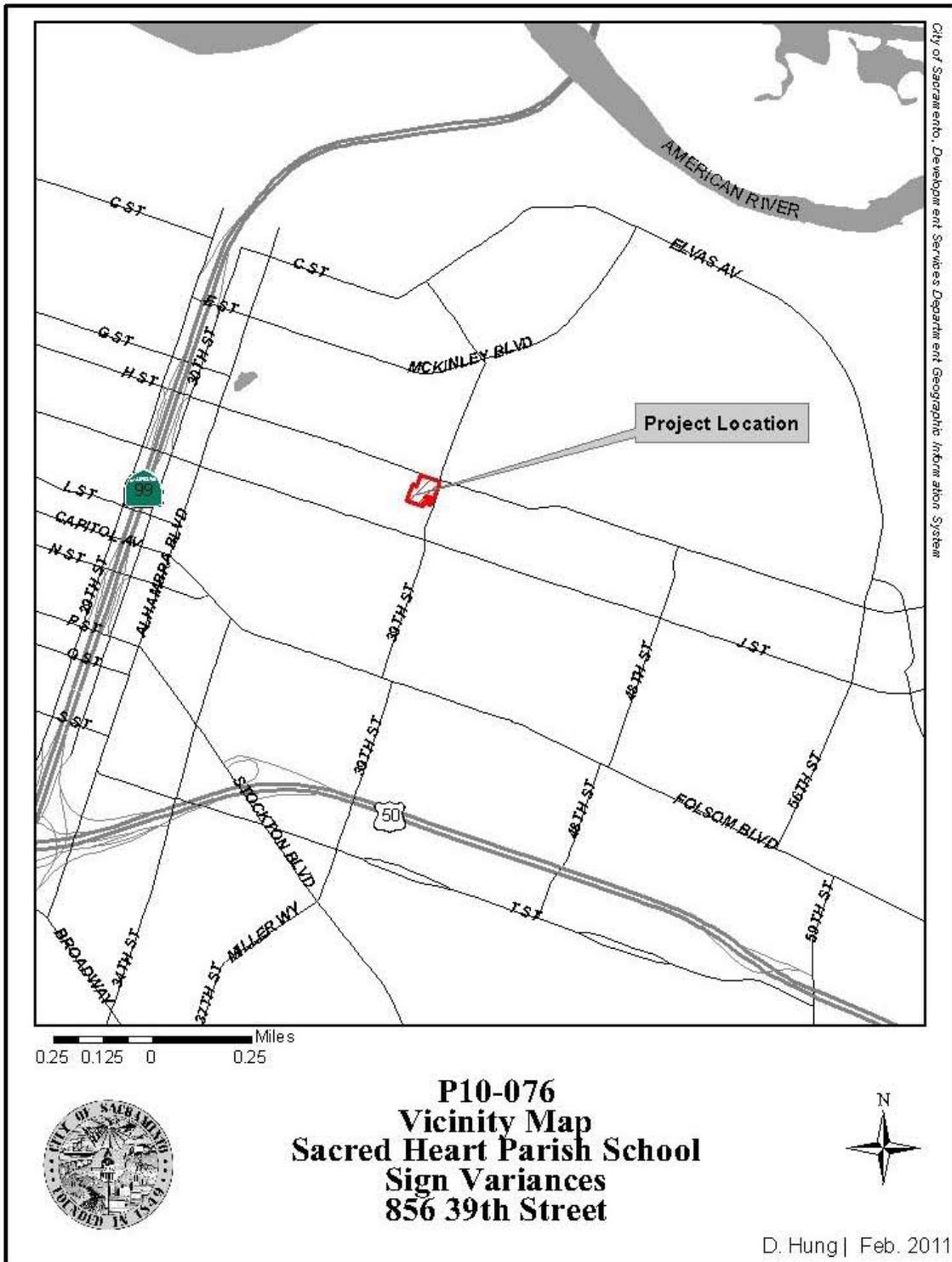
**Recommendation:** Staff recommends the Commission approve the request based on the findings and subject to the conditions listed in Attachment 1. The project is non-controversial at the time of writing of this report. The Commission has final approval authority over items A-D above, and its decision is appealable to City Council.

**Contact:** David Hung, Associate Planner, (916) 808-5530; Stacia Cosgrove, Senior Planner, (916) 808-7110

**Applicant:** Brian Whitmore, Williams+Paddon Architects, (916) 786-8178, 2237 Douglas Blvd., Suite 160, Roseville, CA 95661

**Owner:** Mercy General Hospital, Attn: Jeremy Schrimsher, (916) 453-4545, 4001 J Street, Sacramento, CA 95819

Vicinity Map



**Summary:** The applicant is requesting for a 39 square-foot constructed monument sign to deviate from setback and size requirement and a 33 square-foot constructed attached sign to exceed maximum size allowed. The project requires variances for setback and sizes. Staff has sent early notices to various neighborhood groups in the area and has not received any opposition on the proposal.

<b>Table 1: Project Information</b>
<b>General Plan designation:</b> Traditional Neighborhood Low Density
<b>Existing zoning of site:</b> R-1A (Single-Family Alternative)
<b>Existing use of site:</b> School
<b>Property area:</b> 2.56 acres

**Background Information:** On November 27, 2007, the City Council approved the entitlements to allow the relocation of Sacred Heart Parish School from near the southeast corner of 39<sup>th</sup> and H Streets to the southwest corner of 39<sup>th</sup> and H Streets (P04-215); this relocation allowed the construction of the Alex G. Spanos Heart Center for Mercy General Hospital. The new 2.56-acre Sacred Heart Parish School site was rezoned to Single-Family Alternative (R-1A). The site includes a 25,600 square-foot classroom building and a 16,000 square-foot multi-purposed building and has frontage on both H Street and 39<sup>th</sup> Street. During the entitlement process for the new school, no signage was approved since a separate sign permitting process would be required. The school, which is now in operation, has installed a total of three signs on the campus without the appropriate signage review and approval of sign permits. The three signs include: 1) A 33 square-foot attached sign on brick wall facing H Street; 2) A 39 square-foot detached monument sign near the driveway entrance facing 39<sup>th</sup> Street; 3) An attached sign on a tower feature of a building in the interior of the site. Upon review of the three signs, it was determined that the attached sign at the tower is an architectural design element to pay homage to the original celebratory Sacred Heart Parish School name, is not intended to be viewed from the public street, and therefore is exempt from the sign code. However, the attached sign facing H Street and the monument sign facing 39<sup>th</sup> Street are for school identification purpose for viewing from the public right-of-way and therefore need to comply with the sign code. It was also determined that the wall sign on H Street requires a Variance for its size and the monument on 39<sup>th</sup> Street requires Variances on setback and size.

**Public/Neighborhood Outreach and Comments:** Staff sent early notices to various community groups including the East Sacramento Improvement Association (ESIA), the East Sacramento Preservation Task Force, the McKinley East Sacramento Neighborhood Association (MENA), the East Sacramento Chamber of Commerce and WALKS Sacramento. Staff has not received any comments from the above community groups at the time of the writing of this report.

**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 15311, Accessory Structures. The project consists of the construction and placement of on-premise signs accessory to (appurtenant to) an existing institutional (school) facility.

**Policy Considerations:** The 2030 General Plan Update was adopted by City Council on March 3, 2009. The 2030 General Plan's goals, policies, and implementation programs define a roadmap to achieving Sacramento's vision to be the most livable city in America. The 2030 General Plan Update designation of the subject site is Traditional Neighborhood Low Density which provides for moderate intensity housing and neighborhood-support uses. This designation also allows compatible public, quasi-public, and special uses such as schools. The proposed project meets the 2030 General Plan goals and policies related to Citywide Land Use and Urban Design and the development of the Traditional Neighborhood Low Density designation.

### **Project Design:**

**Monument Sign:** A 39 square-foot detached monument sign for the school has been installed on the north side of the driveway entrance at 39<sup>th</sup> Street, parallel to the street. The sign is located approximately 10'-2" from the property line at 39<sup>th</sup> Street and approximately 6'-3" from the edge of the driveway entrance. The monument sign has an overall length of 8'-3" and a height of 4'-8", or approximately 39 square feet, and is erected over a 1'-0" high concrete base. The monument sign is finished with brick facing and advertises the name of the school and the address with 0.5" thick aluminum anodized bronze lettering that is non-illuminated.

The Sign Ordinance contains the following criteria regarding minimum clearance for detached signs (section 15.148.350): A detached sign shall have a minimum clearance of ten feet between the ground surface and the bottom of the sign, provided that the minimum clearance standard shall not apply if the sign is located in an area not accessible to pedestrian or vehicular traffic, the sign is located at least ten (10) feet from any property line and ten (10) feet from the edge of any driveway entrance, and the sign will not obstruct free and clear vision of motor vehicle operators. Since the monument sign is less than ten feet from the edge of the driveway entrance, a variance is required for not meeting the required setback.

The City of Sacramento Sign Ordinance, per section 15.148.1040, states that the planning commission shall have authority to grant a variance when the following is shown:

- 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;

- 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;
- 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.

Staff supports the setback variance based on the following findings:

1. An exceptional site condition is present in that the monument sign abuts an existing internal sidewalk on one side that makes it difficult to achieve the required ten-foot setback on the opposite driveway side;
2. The variance does not result in a special privilege to one individual property owner and that the variance would be appropriate for another site with similar restrictive site conditions;
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 since the monument sign does not encroach onto sidewalks or driveways and is outside the driveway visibility triangle for signage.

For a school use in the R-1A zone, Section 15.148.110 of the Sign Ordinance provides the following criteria for detached signage:

- One identification sign and one bulletin board for each street frontage not exceeding a total of sixteen (16) square feet in area.
- Any detached sign shall be a monument type sign.
- The height of the monument sign shall not exceed six feet.
- The detached sign may be placed in the landscaped setback area; however, it must be located farther than ten (10) feet from the public right-of-way.

Even though the monument sign does not exceed six feet in overall height, the sign exceeds the maximum sixteen square feet in area. Therefore, a variance on the size of the sign is required.

Staff supports the variance on the sign size based on the following findings:

1. The monument sign is located at the only public driveway to the site, and as such, the lettering must be large enough to direct visitors to the site;
2. The variance does not result in a special privilege to one individual property owner and that the variance would be appropriate for similar sized sign copy on monument signs;
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 that the sign placement and size respects the scale and character of the adjacent neighborhood through attention to views, font style, building scale and orientation, and the sign provides identification and way-finding for the visitors to the site.

Attached Sign: A 33 square-foot attached sign has been installed on wall facing H Street. The sign has an overall length of 24'-6" and an overall height of 1'-4", or approximately 33 square feet. The sign advertises the name of the school with 0.5" thick aluminum anodized bronze lettering that is non-illuminated.

For school use in the R-1A zone, Section 15.148.110 of the Sign Ordinance provides the following criteria for attached signage:

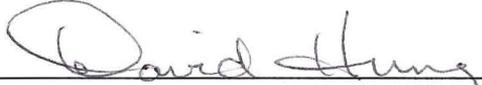
- One identification sign and one bulletin board for each street frontage not exceeding a total of sixteen (16) square feet in area.
- Attached signs shall be placed flat against a building or designed as part of an architectural feature thereof. No height limit is specified for signs placed flat against the wall of a building or for other attached signs provided all other provisions of this chapter are complied with.

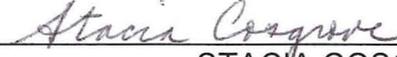
Since the school site is located at the corner and has two street frontages, the Sign Code states that the maximum allowable number and square footage of onsite signs are permitted for each building frontage or occupancy (Section 15.148.220). Therefore, the school is allowed a second identification sign in addition to the monument sign. However, the attached sign has exceeded the allowable maximum of 16 square feet in area and a variance in size of sign is required.

Staff supports the variance on the sign size based on the following findings:

1. Due to the lengthy name of the establishment and the need to use larger lettering height to promote visibility, the size exceeds what is allowed;
2. The variance does not result in a special privilege to one individual property owner and that the variance would be appropriate for similar sized sign copy;
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 that the sign placement and size respects the scale and character of the adjacent neighborhood through attention to views, font style, building scale and orientation, and the sign provides identification and way-finding for the visitors to the site.

**Recommendation:** Staff recommends the Commission approve the requested entitlements based on the findings and subject to the conditions listed in Attachment 1.

Respectfully submitted by:   
DAVID HUNG  
Associate Planner

Approved by:   
STACIA COSGROVE  
Senior Planner

Recommendation Approved:

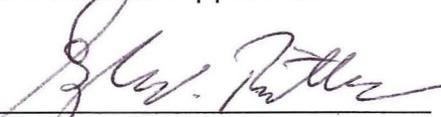
  
GREGORY BITTER  
Principal Planner

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**Attachment 1**  
**Proposed Findings of Fact and Conditions of Approval**  
**Sacred Heart Parish School Sign Variances (P10-076)**  
**856 39<sup>th</sup> Street**

**Findings of Fact**

**A. Environmental Determination: Exemption- Accessory Structures**

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 15311 (Accessory Structures) of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines as follows:

The project consists of the construction and placement of on-premise signs accessory to (appurtenant to) an existing institutional (school) facility.

**B. The Variance** to allow a detached monument sign to be located less than ten (10) feet from the edge of a driveway entrance is approved subject to the following Findings of Fact and Conditions of Approval:

1. An exceptional site condition is present in that the monument sign abuts an existing internal sidewalk on one side that makes it difficult to achieve the required ten-foot setback on the driveway side;
2. The variance does not result in a special privilege to one individual property owner and that the variance would be appropriate for another site with restrictive site conditions;
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 since the monument sign does not encroach onto sidewalks or driveways and is outside the driveway visibility triangle for signage.

**C. The Variance** to allow a detached monument sign to exceed the maximum size allowed in the R-1A zone is approved subject to the following Findings of Fact and Conditions of Approval:

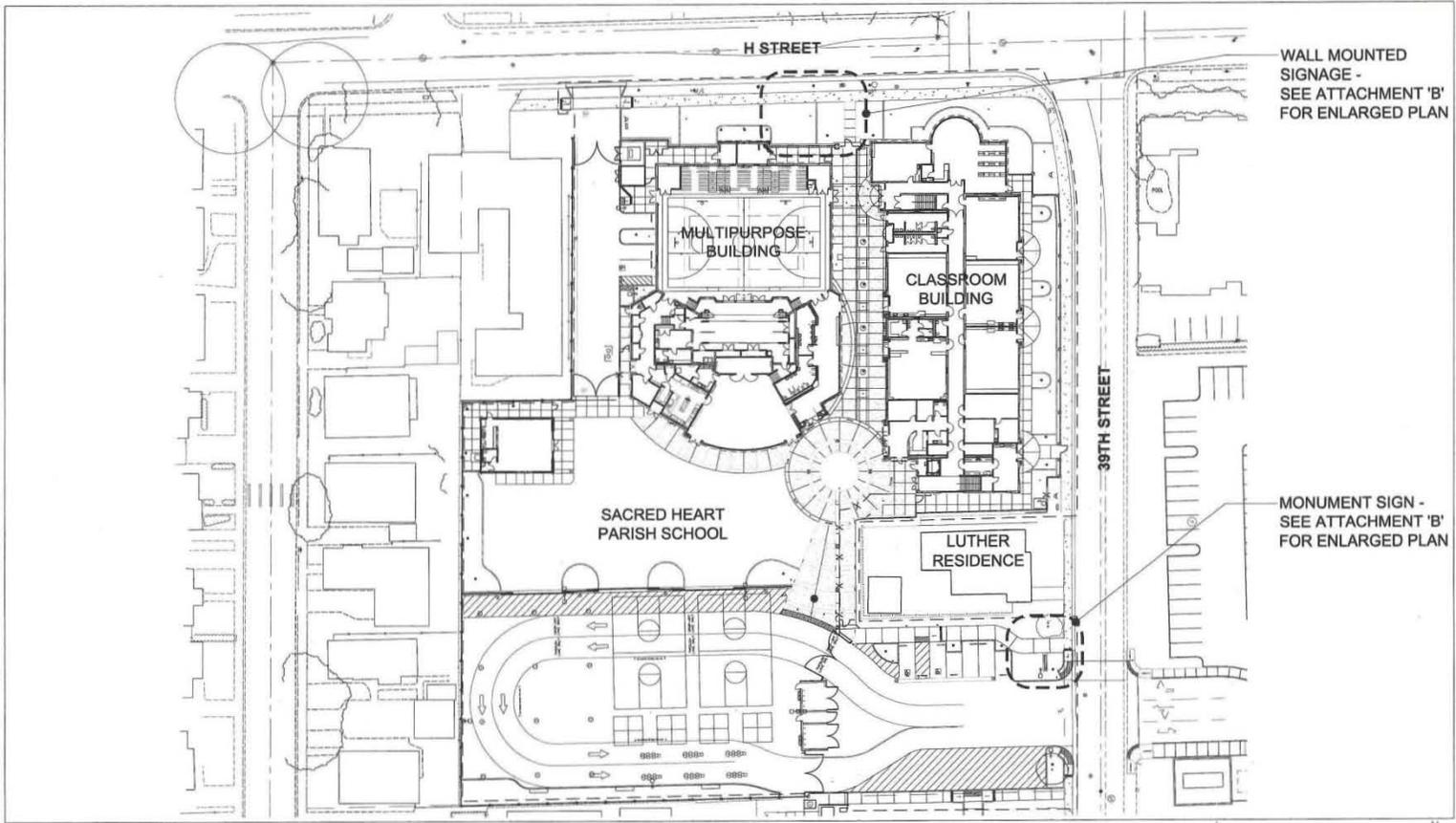
1. The monument sign is located at the only public driveway to the site, and as such, the lettering must be large enough to direct visitors to the site;
2. The variance does not result in a special privilege to one individual property owner and that the variance would be appropriate for similar sized sign copy on monument signs;

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 that the sign placement and size respects the scale and character of the adjacent neighborhood through attention to views, font style, building scale and orientation, and the sign provides identification and way-finding for the visitors to the site.
- D.** The **Variance** to allow an attached sign to exceed the maximum size allowed in the R-1A zone is approved subject to the following Findings of Fact and Conditions of Approval:
1. Due to the lengthy name of the establishment and the need to use larger lettering height to promote visibility, the size exceeds what is allowed;
  2. The variance does not result in a special privilege to one individual property owner and that the variance would be appropriate for similar sized sign copy;
  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 that the sign placement and size respects the scale and character of the adjacent neighborhood through attention to views, font style, building scale and orientation, and the sign provides identification and way-finding for the visitors to the site.

### **Conditions of Approval**

- B/C/D. The **Variance** to allow a detached monument sign to be located less than ten (10) feet from the edge of a driveway entrance, the **Variance** to allow a detached monument sign to exceed the maximum size allowed in the R-1A zone, and the **Variance** to allow an attached sign to exceed the maximum size allowed in the R-1A zone are **approved** subject to the following Conditions of Approval:
- B/C/D1. The applicant shall obtain all necessary building and/or sign permits in relation to the monument sign and the attached sign shown on Exhibit 1A-1C.
- B/C/D2. Modifications to any of the signs reviewed under this application shall be subject to approval by the Planning Division prior to the issuance of sign permits.
- B/C/D3. Monument sign to be designed as per the structural provisions of Chapter 16 of the 2010 California Building Code.

Exhibit 1A – Overall Site Plan



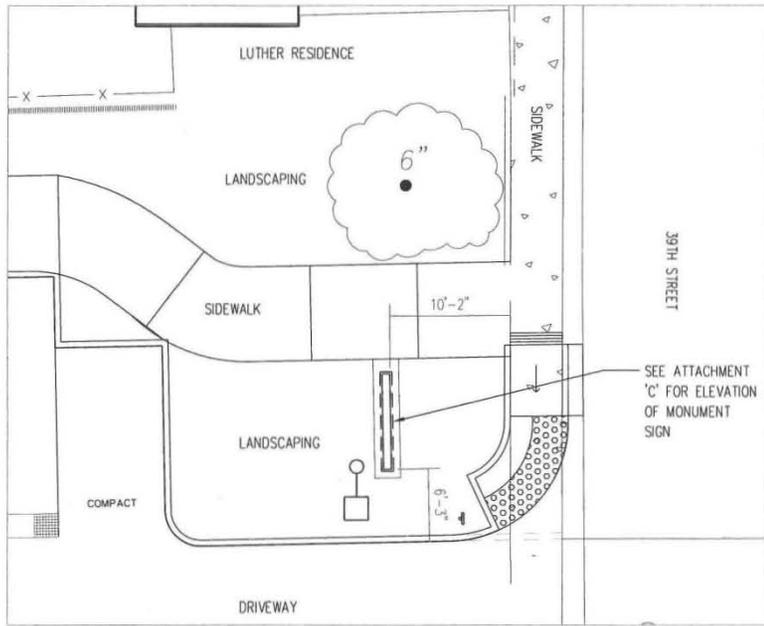
WILLIAMS+PADDON/ARCHITECTS + PLANNER, INC.  
 2237 DOUGLAS BLVD., SUITE 160  
 ROSEVILLE, CA 95661

SACRED HEART PARISH SCHOOL  
 856 39TH STREET  
 MONUMENT SIGNAGE  
 EXHIBIT 'A' - OVERALL SITE PLAN

SCALE: 1"=50'  
 NOVEMBER 10, 2010

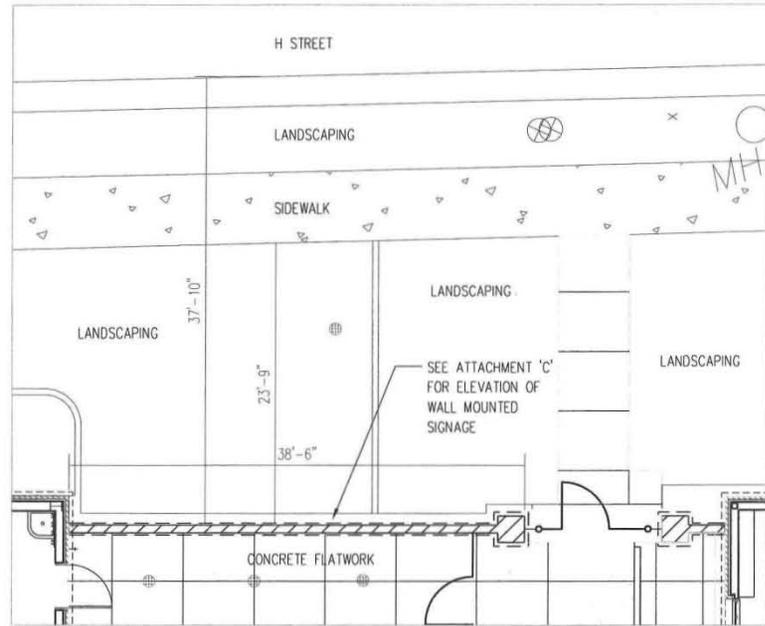
P10-076  
 11-10-2010

Exhibit 1B – Enlarged Site Plans



MONUMENT SIGN AT 39ST STREET ENTRANCE  
ENLARGED SITE PLAN

SCALE: 1/8"=1'-0"  
N



WALL MOUNTED SIGNAGE FACING H STREET  
ENLARGED SITE PLAN

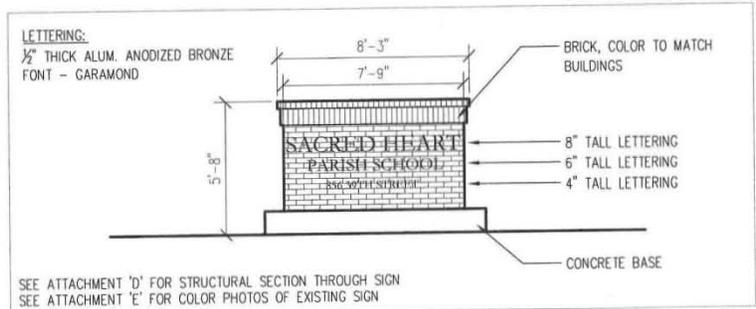
SCALE: 1/8"=1'-0"  
N

SACRED HEART PARISH SCHOOL  
856 39TH STREET  
MONUMENT SIGNAGE  
EXHIBIT 'B' - ENLARGED SITE PLANS

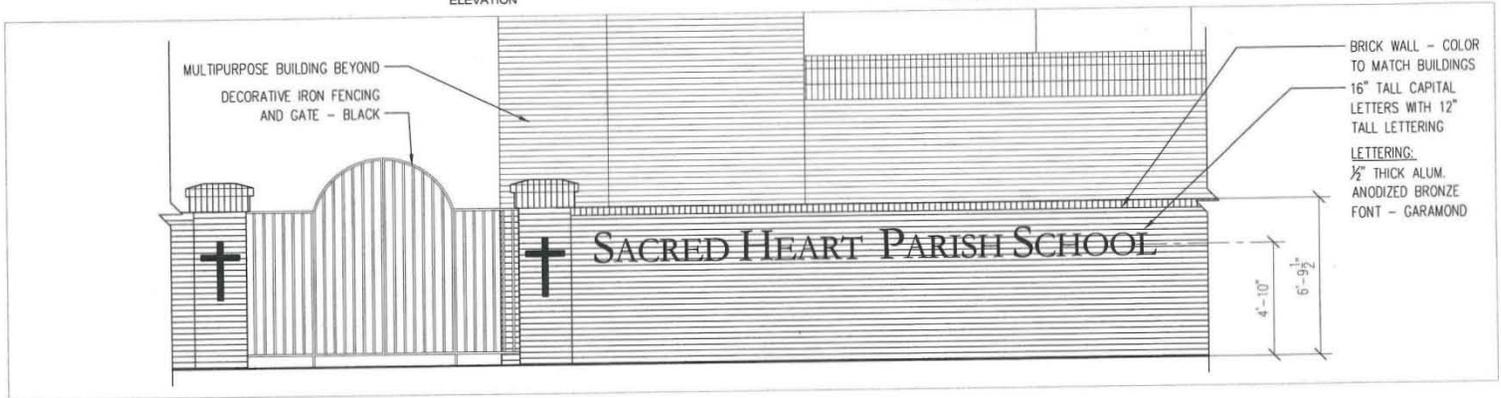
WILLIAMS+PADDON/ARCHITECTS + PLANNER, INC.  
2237 DOUGLAS BLVD., SUITE 160  
ROSEVILLE, CA 95661

NOVEMBER 10, 2010

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MONUMENT SIGN AT 39ST STREET ENTRANCE  
 ELEVATION SCALE: 1/4"=1'-0"



WALL MOUNTED SIGNAGE FACING H STREET  
 ELEVATION SCALE: 1/4"=1'-0"

SACRED HEART PARISH SCHOOL  
 856 39TH STREET  
 MONUMENT SIGNAGE  
 EXHIBIT 'C' - ELEVATIONS

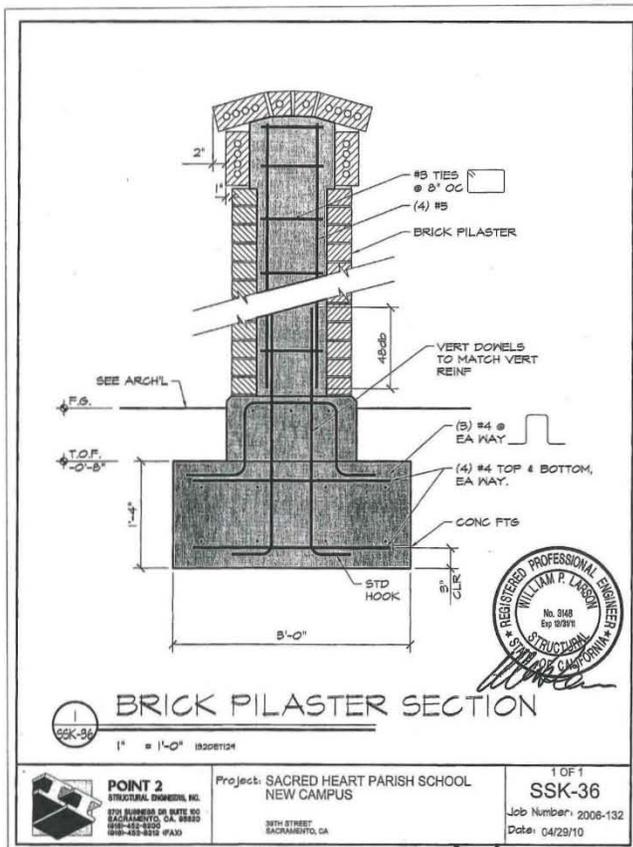
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 2237 DOUGLAS BLVD., SUITE 160  
 ROSEVILLE, CA 95661

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Exhibit 1C - Elevations

Exhibit 1D – Structural Section at Monument Sign



SACRED HEART PARISH SCHOOL  
 856 39TH STREET  
 MONUMENT SIGNAGE  
 EXHIBIT 'D' - STRUCTURAL SECTION THROUGH SIGN

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WILLIAMS+PADDON/ARCHITECTS + PLANNER, INC.  
 2237 DOUGLAS BLVD., SUITE 160  
 ROSEVILLE, CA 95661

 <b>POINT 2</b> STRUCTURAL ENGINEER, INC. 2701 PLUMMER OAK BLVD. #20 SACRAMENTO, CA, 95820 916-452-7400 916-452-8218 (FAX)	Project: SACRED HEART PARISH SCHOOL NEW CAMPUS	1 OF 1 <b>SSK-36</b>
	39TH STREET SACRAMENTO, CA	Job Number: 2006-132 Date: 04/29/10

Exhibit 1E – Photos at Monument Sign



VIEW FROM DRIVEWAY



VIEW FROM 39TH STREET



VIEW FROM 39TH STREET SIDEWALK

SACRED HEART PARISH SCHOOL  
856 39TH STREET  
MONUMENT SIGNAGE  
EXHIBIT 'E' - PHOTOGRAPHS OF EXISTING SIGN

WILLIAMS+PADDON/ARCHITECTS + PLANNER, INC.  
2237 DOUGLAS BLVD., SUITE 160  
ROSEVILLE, CA 95661

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Attachment 2 – Land Use & Zoning Map

