



*An independent, Catholic
college preparatory school
for grades 6-12.*

August 5, 2021

Re: Priory Conditional Use Permit Update

Dear Neighbors,

Since 1957, before the Town was even incorporated, Priory has been part of Portola Valley; we have grown up together. While I am new to this community, I am excited to support and serve Priory as we continually strive to improve the superior Benedictine education that our school community has come to expect from Priory.

As the new Head of School, one of my first goals was to get to know the community - students and teachers, of course, but also the Town and our neighbors. Unfortunately, my first year coincided with the pandemic, and the recent reopening of the school came with graduation at its heels. This left no opportunity for us to become more properly acquainted. I hope to address that this coming year, and to welcome you to our campus so we can meet.

Before we have that opportunity, however, I want you to be aware that we are working with the Town to update our Conditional Use Permit (CUP), a process that began prior to the Pandemic. We are requesting that our CUP be amended as follows:

1. Modular Buildings. We are asking the Town to allow for permanent classroom use of the two modular buildings currently located at the south end of our athletic fields. Over the past several years, they have been used on a temporary basis for various surge uses. Rather than construct new academic space already approved under our current CUP, Priory has decided to conserve resources and repurpose these existing moduls as permanent facilities for educational use. We are proposing to implement a native vegetation screening plan which incorporates feedback from Town staff and the Conservation Committee to decrease visibility of these buildings from Portola Road.
2. Students, Teachers and Staff. In response to both the increasing interest in a Priory education and the financial realities of operating an independent school in the Bay Area, Priory is requesting an increase in the maximum average daily attendance to 394 students from the current 350 maximum student enrollment that was established in 2004. Priory is requesting an associated increase in the number of teachers and staff (5 of each) to support these additional students. The Traffic and Parking Assessment commissioned by the Town concludes that these additional increases would result in an approximately 1-3% increase in vehicle trips on Portola Road and Alpine Road which "is not substantial because they are within typical variations in daily and peak hour traffic on these streets and thus would not be noticeable by drivers."

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Woodside Priory School

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3. Parking. To address Town staff concerns regarding adequacy of on campus parking under our current CUP and to accommodate our proposed increase in teachers, students and staff, we have identified an opportunity to provide 53 additional parking spaces on campus. These spaces would be located in various locations with 14 spaces serving our housing, 29 spaces designated for specific academic, athletic, or other purposes, and 10 overflow spaces available for additional academic and athletic use. The Traffic and Parking Assessment concludes that the proposed increase in students and teachers would generate a parking demand of 15 spaces which would be accommodated by the 53 additional spaces proposed.

Woodside Priory is proud to be part of Portola Valley. Our histories are interconnected, and our futures are linked. As we carefully and thoughtfully consider the continued evolution of the school needed in the coming years for learning and teaching, we will continue to work closely with the community, to remain sensitive to the concerns of our neighbors, and committed to contributing positively to our town's quality of life.

We anticipate that our CUP application will be going to the Planning Commission for a study session in the coming weeks. You will be receiving written notice of this meeting from the Town once it is scheduled. In the meantime, I invite you to review our application materials which are available at the Town and reach out to me at the email below or to our project planner Dylan Parker (dparker@portolavalley.net or 650.851.1700 Ext. 230) with any questions, concerns, or comments.

Sincerely,



Patrick Ruff
Head of School
pruff@prioryca.org