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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

June 2, 2008

Ms. Nadia Hayes
St. John The Theologian Greek Orthodox Church
202 North Walnut Street
Webster, TX 77598

Re: Church Expansion

Dear Ms. Hayes:

This letter is in reference to your recent inquiries as to expanding the above church at the above location. I initially communicated that expanding the facility and parking lot to encompass 412 Henrietta Street and 421 Slossen, in addition to the existing 202 North Walnut Street location, could be challenging in terms of being in character with the neighborhood. It would require a Special Use Permit, in which case the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council, after public hearings, would have to determine that it is compatible with adjacent properties and would not adversely affect the neighborhood. The criteria it has to meet are specifically as follows per the zoning ordinance (Sec. 98-122):

(3) That the special use permit will be wholly compatible with the use and permitted development of adjacent properties either as filed or subject to such requirements as the city council may find necessary to protect and maintain the stability of adjacent properties. The city council may also determine conditions to be met to meet the intent of this chapter. They may include hours of operation.

(4) Granting of the special use permit will not adversely affect the character and appropriate use of the area or neighborhood in which it is proposed to locate; will not substantially depreciate the value of adjacent and nearby properties for use in accordance with the regulations of the zoning district in which they are located; will be in keeping with the spirit and intent of this chapter; will not adversely affect the implementation of the comprehensive plan; and will not adversely affect traffic, public utilities, public health, public safety, and the general welfare.

I believe it would be difficult to demonstrate that you are meeting those criteria and, thus, for staff to recommend approval. We also had a similar case recently where a church wanted to utilize an adjacent residence. We were forced to recommend denial due to the circumstances. We would have to be consistent with that recommendation.

Please note that a probable negative staff recommendation doesn't entail that you cannot submit an application and go through the process. Rather, our intent is to be upfront if there could be issues because we understand the investment you would be making in the project. There are also

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alternatives to your originally desired expansion. For example, I do not believe that redevelopment of the current site would necessarily be out of character. We will continue to work with you towards submitting a Special Use Permit application that we could support before the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council.

Sincerely,

Travis Tanner

Travis Tanner, AICP
City Planner