

11 August 2025

Sarah Fletcher
fletchsa1@gmail.com

Re: DSR25-009 Comment Response

Dear Sarah Fletcher,

Thank you for your comments regarding the submitted Design Review application. We've taken the liberty of summarizing and responding to the main points:

He informs them that it is a school for "40 students."

[I am a female Architect.]

The Project Narrative does not address the number of students. The Transportation Impact Analysis states an enrollment of up to 150 students.

It seems that they are going to be joining forces with the JDS School which is in Seattle.

The Jewish Day School of Seattle is currently located in Bellevue.

What Herzl just does not seem to understand is that this is in a residential zoned area, it is not in a commercially zoned area.

The Barnabie Point site is commercially zoned.

You can't just allow the applicant to remove trees which are part of a grove.

Unfortunately, the grading necessary to install the building foundations means that we are unable to preserve as many trees as originally projected. Our tree calculations will be revised to accurately reflect the most recent plans. We will protect existing trees to remain and provide tree replacement per the requirements of the Mercer Island Municipal Code, which allows for fee in-lieu when there is not adequate room to plant replacement trees on site. The Mercer Island Municipal Code does not allow zoning variations in order to preserve trees.

is this going to be a two-way parking lot? And where exactly are the parents planning on dropping off their children?

Please see drawings 4 and 5/A-010, which show the direction of traffic and the drop-off location. Traffic will be two-way. Caregivers will be able to pull out of traffic to drop off their children directly to a sidewalk. Preschoolers will drop-off separately, with parents parking and walking their children into the building.

Any additional development is just going to add to the congestion.

We understand that traffic is a primary concern. In collaboration with our traffic consultant, we have carefully designed a drop-off and pick-up flow that will allow for 62 waiting cars to be stored on the existing synagogue's driveway loop while enabling parents to quickly and efficiently drop off their students. Preschool and K-8 drop-off will be staggered to allow the parents and caregivers of a maximum of 40 preschool children to park and exit their vehicles. Further details can be found in the traffic analysis and on the site plan.

The Traffic Impact Analysis completed followed all City guidelines and meets the requirements for a full SEPA Analysis. The trip generation land use categories and rates outlined in the Mercer Island Transportation Concurrency Ordinance are based on the 10th Edition of the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation Manual (10th Edition, 2017). As noted in the Transportation Impact Analysis report submitted (May 2024), project impacts were analyzed based on trip generation from the most updated ITE Trip Generation Manual (11th Edition, 2021). Land use codes for the proposed Private School (K-8) (LU #530) and General Office Building (LU #710) were used, corresponding to the land use codes, rates and equations in the updated 11th Edition manual. As shown in Table 4 as well as Appendix D of the Transportation Impact Analysis, the private school (K-8), based on ITE's 11th Edition LU #530, has a trip rate of 0.26 trips per student during the weekday PM peak hour resulting in 39 trips. The office building, based on ITE's 11th Edition LU #710, uses an equation to calculate trips during the weekday PM peak hour per guidance from ITE. The effective trip rate for 12,300sf of office space is approximately 2.36 trips per 1,000 sf, resulting in 29 trips associated with the office use during the weekday PM peak hour. As shown in Table 4 as well as Appendix D of the Transportation Impact Analysis, the site is estimated to generate 68 new trips during the weekday PM peak hour.

The report further demonstrates a delay of 32 seconds or less relative to projected conditions without the project.

Please note that the City of Mercer Island engages an outside peer reviewer to evaluate the transportation analysis to ensure that it meets the standards required.

It seems like the City refuses them a permit or CUP or whatever, so instead of just giving it a bone, they try a different tactic.

To our knowledge, this project has not been refused a permit or a CUP, but is following the processes outlined by the Mercer Island Municipal Code.

You have the JCC requesting a zone change to accommodate what I deem a Jewish student campus. So, why can't Herzl ask the JCC if they could join forces with them and put their school somewhere on their property?

The scope of this project is limited to the site owned by Herzl ner-Tamid.

Across the road, the JCC have spillover lighting for which they refuse to do anything about, and nor does the City make them do anything to make it so that there is no bright lighting. The same thing is going to happen to this property should they get the go ahead.

Site lighting has been designed which follows all City guidelines and is dark sky compliant. Please see E-102 which shows no spillover from new lighting.

I would request that there is a community meeting at the site itself with the City staff, Anjali and the Hearing Examiner going over this project. That would be fair. I don't know if my comments go before the Hearing Examiner, so I hope you will make sure he gets my email with all my comments.

The public process is mandated by City of Mercer Island laws and regulations, which the Design Team is bound to follow. We will comply with all applicable codes and regulations.

This is the wrong project for this single family residential area.

The school building is proposed to be located on a lot that has been commercially zoned for 25 years. There is no change of zoning proposed. According to Goal 17.2 of the Land Use policies in the City's state-mandated Comprehensive Plan, "Commercial uses and densities near the I-90/East Mercer Way exit and SE 36th Street are appropriate for that area." The City of Mercer Island, like many other communities across the State of Washington, is obligated to plan for growth and has designated the commercially zoned lot, by use of zoning, to be an area of growth.

Thank you again for your feedback and participation in the public process.

Sincerely,

Anjali Grant