



MEMORANDUM Transportation & Development – PZ Memo No. 13-010

DATE: JANUARY 25, 2013
TO: PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
THRU: R.J. ZEDER, TRANSPORTATION & DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR
 JEFF KURTZ, PLANNING ADMINISTRATOR
 KEVIN MAYO, PLANNING MANAGER *KM*
FROM: JODIE M. NOVAK, MEP, SENIOR CITY PLANNER *JMN*
SUBJECT: ZUP12-0017 SHEILA’S CHRISTIAN ACADEMY “MINDS IN MOTION”

Request: Approval of a time extension for a Use Permit to allow a residential childcare/academic training for children business within a Planned Area Development (PAD) zoning district for single-family residential

Location: 2735 W. Highland Street, south of Warner Road and east of the northbound Loop 101 Price Freeway off of Coronado Street

Applicant: Sheila Schmidt

RECOMMENDATION

Upon finding the request to be consistent with the General Plan and the approved Planned Area Development (PAD) zoning, Planning Staff recommends approval of the Use Permit for a residential childcare/academic training for children business subject to conditions.

BACKGROUND

The Use Permit request is to operate a residential childcare/academic training for children business within a single-family home located in a single family residential neighborhood. The home serves as the primary residence for the business owner who has lived at this residence with her family for over 20 years.

Residential childcare is permitted in single-family residences as an accessory use to the primary residence allowing up to 4 children for compensation. A Use Permit is required for at least 5 up to a maximum of 10 children for compensation. In May 2002, the subject site was granted a Use Permit for 5 years to operate a residential childcare use. The Use Permit expired in May 2007. A

Use Permit time extension was granted in September 2007 for an additional 5 years. The business maintains a State licensing as a childcare group home. The request is to approve the Use Permit with no time limit and continue having up to 10 students for compensation.

The single-family home is approximately 2,169 square feet. The property owner resides in the home while also running a childcare school business. The childcare school is open Tuesday thru Friday 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. and follows the local school district calendar. There is no childcare or schooling Monday, Saturday, or Sunday. The majority of children attend the full day school from 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. However, there are two other sessions offered from 8:00 a.m. to 12 p.m. and an afternoon session from 12:30 to 3:30 p.m. The academic training program operates from mid-August through the end of May. The childcare school includes up to 10 students for compensation. There is a teacher, the property/business owner, and an assistant. The school starting and ending time changed since 2007 starting 30 minutes earlier and ending 30 minutes later.

The school's outdoor play area is located on the property's side yard on the east side of the home and is screened by a 6-foot high perimeter wall. The applicant is not requesting any building modifications or expansions of the property as part of this request. A fire department approved third party monitored automatic smoke detection system has been installed. The home is not located within a homeowners association.

Planning Staff is recommending Use Permit approval with no time limit given this childcare school has been approved with a Use Permit since 2002 and there have been no complaints from area homeowners during this time. Staff is of the opinion that the proposed residential academic training for children business works well at this location and does not impact the surrounding neighborhood.

PUBLIC/NEIGHBORHOOD NOTIFICATION

- This request was noticed in accordance with the requirements of the Chandler Zoning Code.
- A neighborhood meeting was held on December 19, 2012. Six area neighbors representing a few homes in the area attended in support of this request.
- Staff received one phone call from an adjacent property owner to the east. The homeowner conveyed they moved in about 1 ½ years ago and has concerns with the abutting playground area, the noise from kids, and vehicular traffic in the morning and evening. The homeowner did not provide a name or number for Staff to follow up.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Planning Staff, upon finding consistency with the General Plan, recommends approval of the Use Permit subject to the following conditions:

1. Use Permit approval for operating residential childcare shall be applicable only to the location identified with this application and shall not be transferable to any other location.
2. The Use Permit is granted for a maximum of 10 children for compensation.

PZ Memo No. 13-010

January 25, 2013

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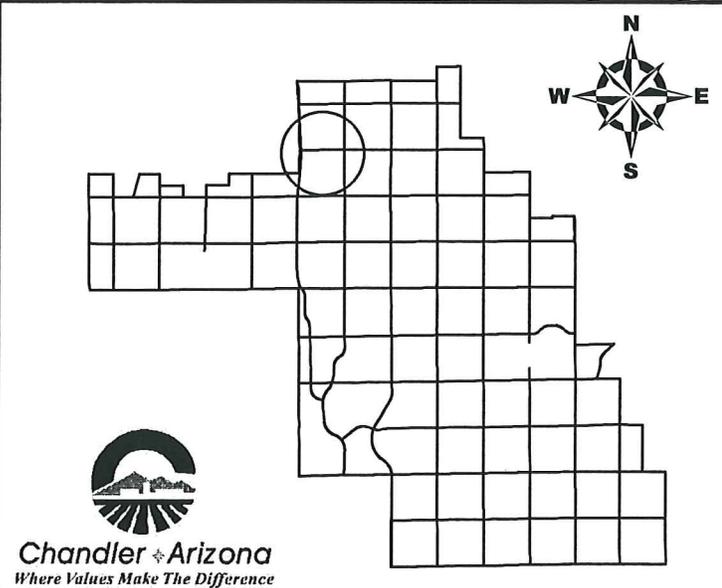
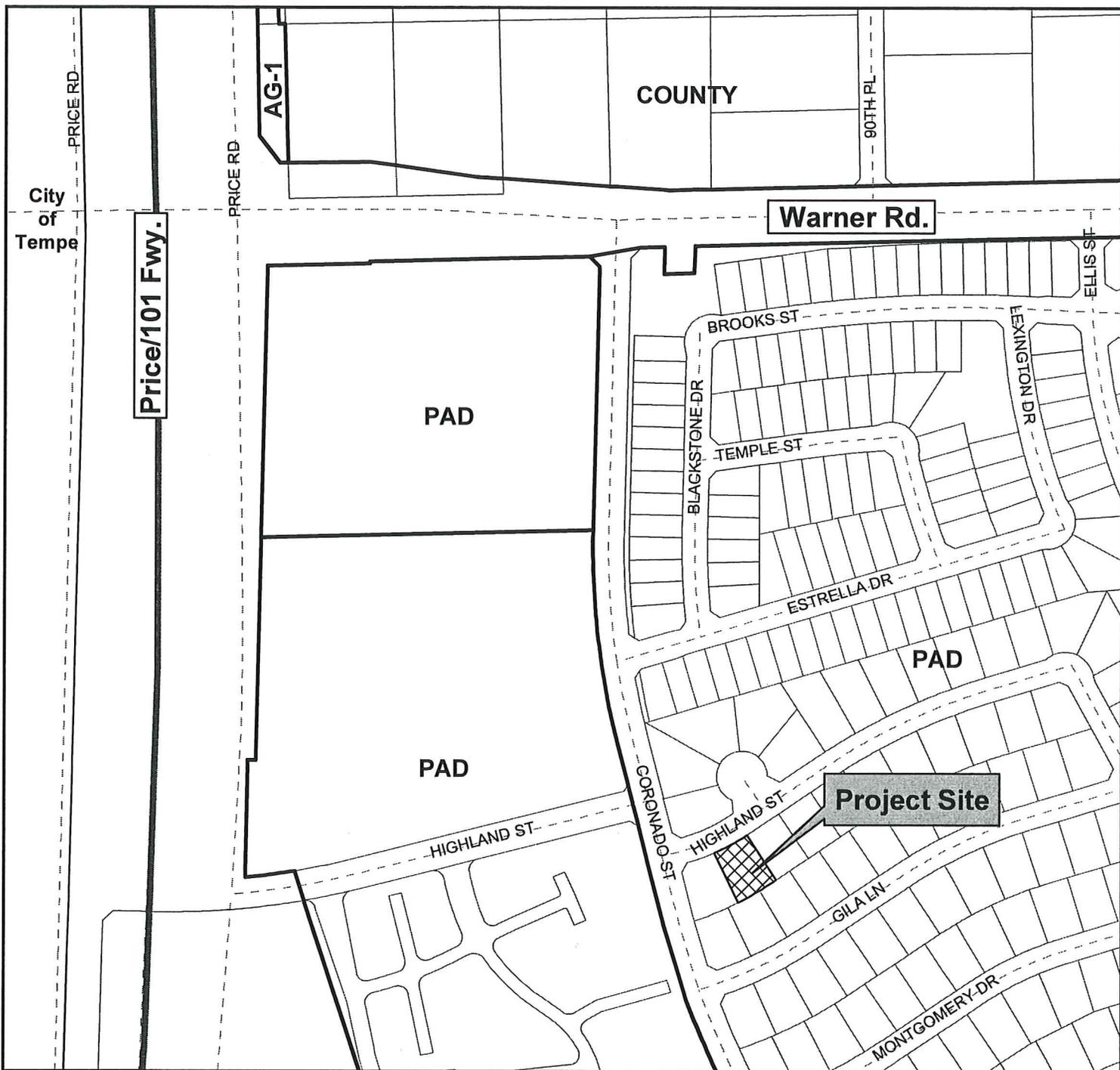
3. Expansion or modification beyond the approved exhibits (Site Plan, Floor Plan, Narrative) shall require a new Use Permit application and approval.

RECOMMENDATION

Motion to recommend approval of Use Permit case ZUP12-0017 SHEILA'S CHRISTIAN ACADEMY "MINDS IN MOTION" subject to the conditions recommended by Planning Staff.

Attachments

1. Vicinity Map
2. Narrative
3. Aerial Photo
4. Site Plan/Floor Plan
5. School schedule
6. Letters of Support

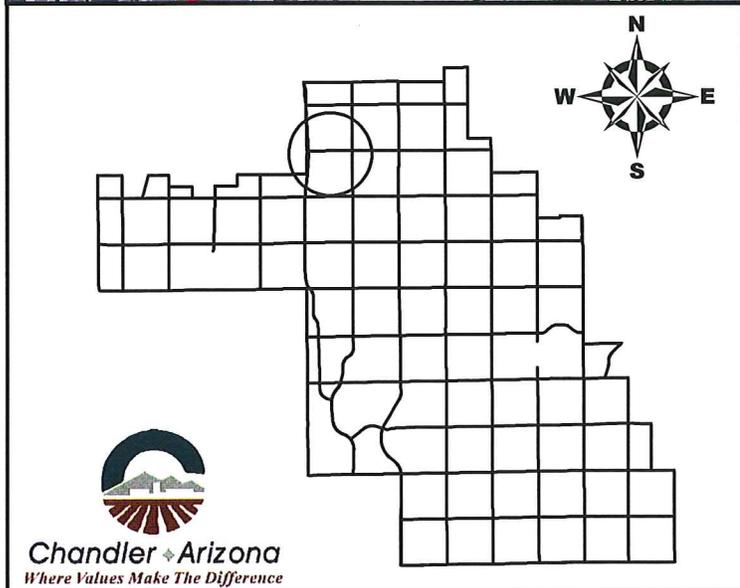
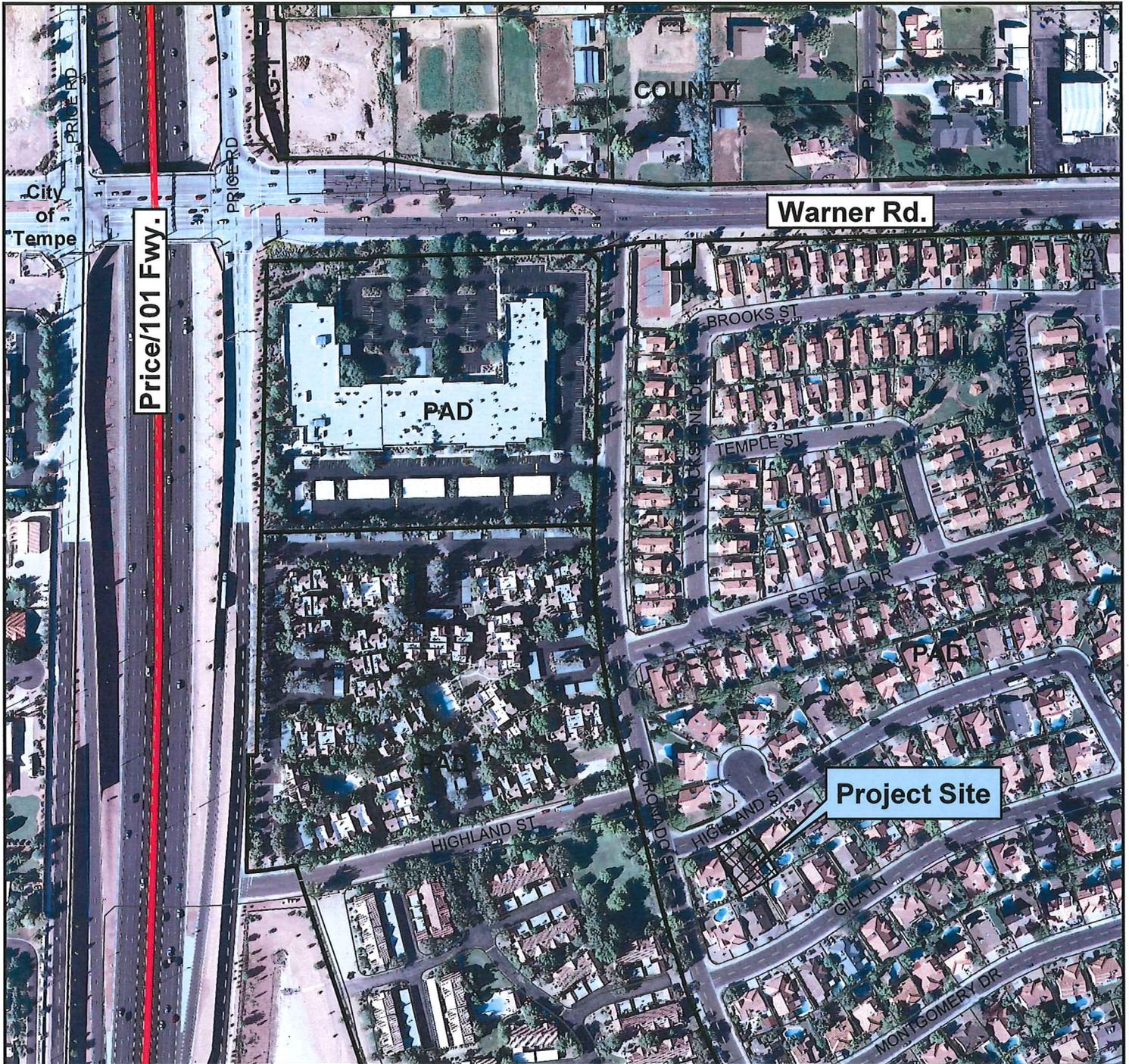


Vicinity Map

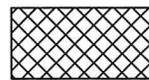
 ZUP12-0017

**Sheila's Christian Academy
"Minds In Motion"**





Vicinity Map



ZUP12-0017

**Sheila's Christian Academy
"Minds In Motion"**

July 16, 2012

NARRATIVE STATEMENT

RE: Zoning Case ZUP12-0017 Sheila's Christian Academy "Minds in Motion"

I am the owner/director/ lead teacher of Sheila's Christian Academy "Minds in Motion". This business is located within my single-family home at 2735 West Highland Street in Chandler. This is a Montessori school, state licensed by DHS (Department of Health Services) since 1995.

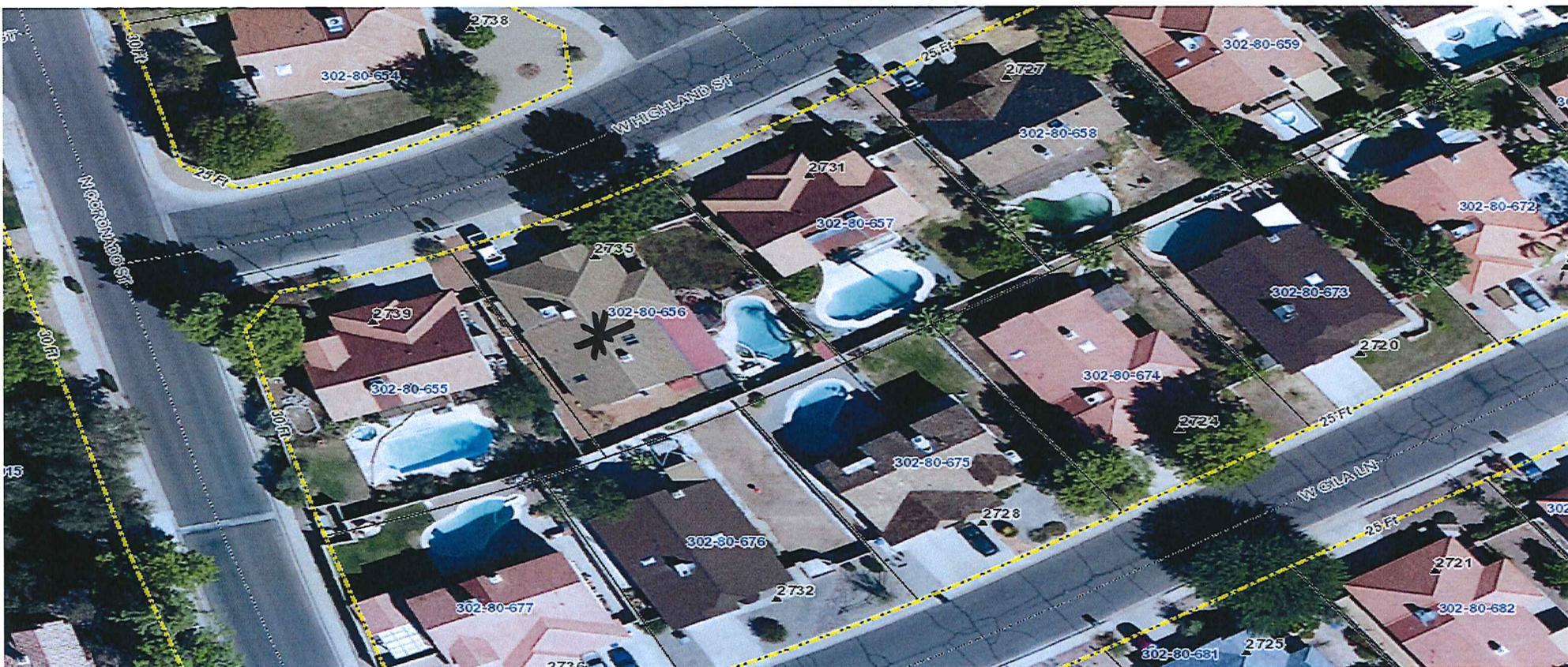
I have had a Use Permit approved by City of Chandler for this property since May 2002 in which a 5-year Use Permit was granted. An additional five years was granted in 2007. This is my third Use Permit request. I have been running this licensed group preschool within my home for the past 17 years since 1995. I have lived in the same neighborhood/home for over 23 years.

The home is my primary residence and where the school operates. The home is approximately 2,169 livable square feet on an approximate 8,860 square foot lot. I have 10 students in my care with a qualified assistant. I am licensed up to a maximum 10 students and request Use Permit approval for a maximum of 10 students for compensation. There is a 1:5 teacher/child ratio that is required by State law. A Spanish teacher comes for an hour twice a week. My main school calendar year runs from August through May. It is open Tuesdays through Fridays 8:00 AM to 3:30 PM. I have an optional AM and PM session available although a majority of my students stay a full day. Last year, I only had three students that did not come all day. Morning sessions run from 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM and the afternoon session runs from 12:30 to 3:30 PM. I am closed during major holidays and try to follow closely with the Chandler and Tempe school district's schedule.

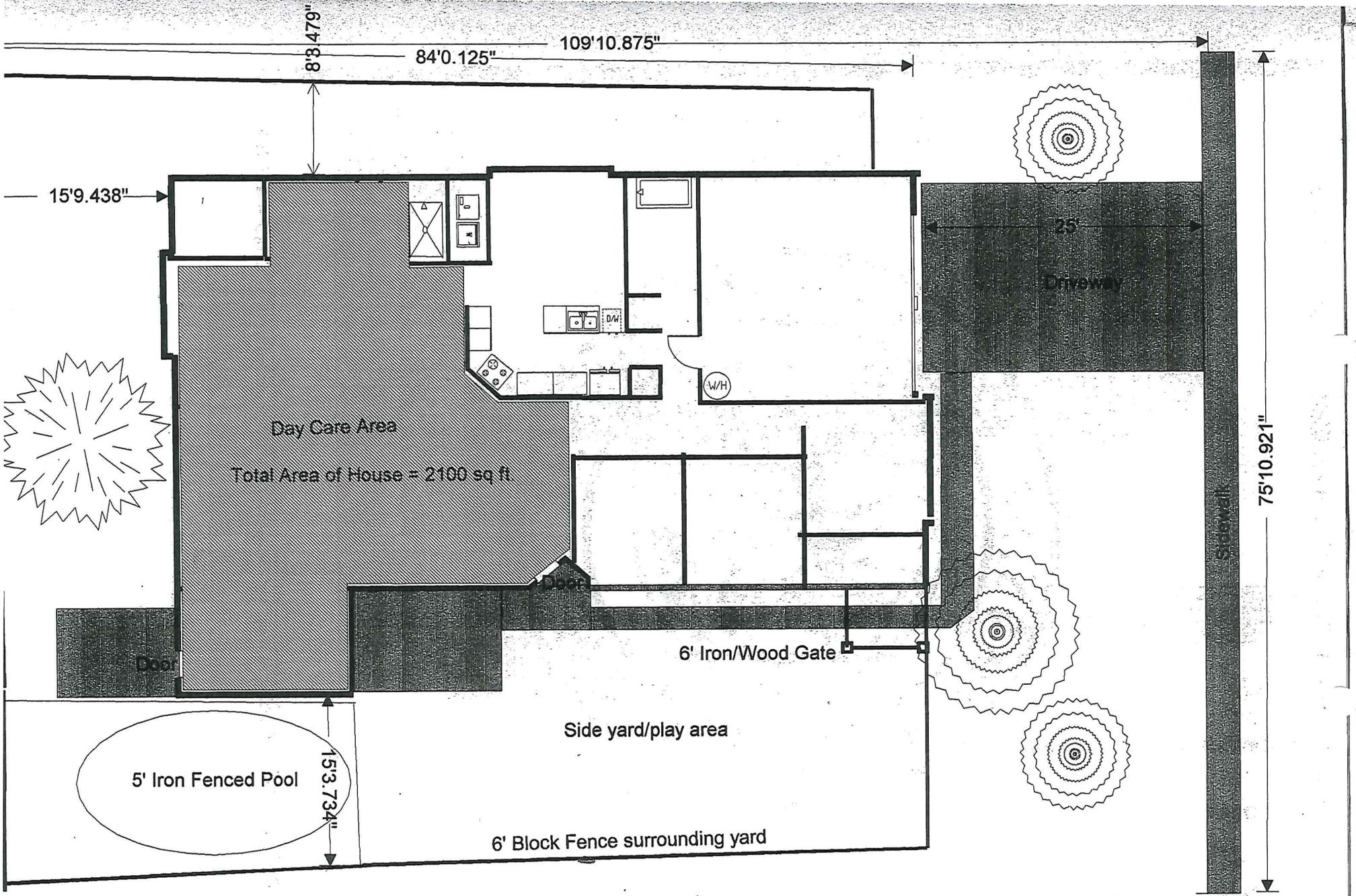
Sincerely,

Sheila Schmidt

Director/Owner of Sheila's Christian Academy "Minds in Motion"



* subjectsite



School's Daily Schedule

Tuesday-Friday

8:00-8:30 AM Outdoor Play

8:30-11:00 PM Work Time (individual and small group)

11:00-11:30 PM Circle Time (includes music, show-and-tell,
and group reading)

11:30-12:00 PM Lunch time

12:00-12:30 PM Outdoor Play

12:15-12:30 PM Pick-up and drop off students

12:30-3:00 PM Work Time (Individual and small group)

3:00-3:30 PM Circle Time (includes music, show-and-tell, and
group reading)

3:30 PM Parents pick-up students inside the classroom

Spanish Classes are Wednesday and Friday's 11:45-12:15 PM

** No outdoor play after school **

January 13, 2013

To Whom It May Concern,

I apologize for not being able to make it to her open house, however I wanted to write a quick note about Sheila's Pre-school Program. I have lived two doors down the street from Sheila and Tom for several years and have always found them to be considerate and respectful.

I have kids of my own, however they were too old to go to her school. I would have loved to have been able to walk them right down the street.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jamie Rippey".

Jamie Rippey
2727 W. Highland St.
Chandler, AZ 85224

January 13, 2013

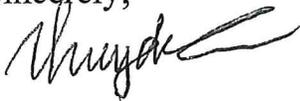
To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in regards to Sheila Schmidt and the preschool program she runs across the street from my home at 2730 West Highland St. I have been her neighbor for over 20 years and know she runs a quality program in her home.

She has always been mindful of the neighbors and any concerns they may have. I am happy to have her close by and even checked into having my granddaughter attend her program.

I support her daycare and encourage her efforts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Teresa Tran', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Teresa Tran
2730 West Highland St.
Chandler, AZ. 85224



Sheila Schmidt "Sheila's Academy Minds in Motion"

Walter Baines to: Jodie.Novak

01/20/2013 07:14 PM

From: Walter Baines <walter.baines@gmail.com>

To: Jodie.Novak@chandlerAZ.gov

History: This message has been replied to.

My wife and I and one of our daughters live at 2715 W Highland St, the fifth house east of Sheila's "Academy." We are pleased that Sheila and her husband have been such great neighbors! Their yard is immaculately kept; and once I had an electrical problem at home that her husband helped me solve quickly.

It was several years before I realized that Sheila even had an academy - other than seeing different cars from time to time, we noticed no unusual traffic. When we did find out, curiosity compelled me to actually visit their home/academy to find out what type of academy it was. My daughter is a K5 school teacher, so I had an idea of what would be taught - Sheila's academy goes a big step further on. With a class size limited to 10 with 2 teachers, what these young folks are learning is absolutely astounding! I reviewed the curriculum, the learning aids, saw some of the papers, saw how the home was configured for learning - truly awe-inspiring.

Since my wife stopped working a couple years ago, I've had more occasion to drop by the house during the day - only once near Christmas did I see multiple cars near the academy, and I later found out it was one of the three annual events Sheila's academy had for their parents - and I almost missed it since it only lasted an hour and a half. I've had more concern for some of the other neighbor's parties than anything Sheila's academy has caused!

While I do not know the Schmid's very well, Sheila's integrity and honesty are so apparent that it is a joy to be able to call them our neighbors, and give my full support to the work they are doing in their home.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to let me know. Thank you!

Walter Baines, 2715 W Highland St, Chandler, AZ 85224-7838, cell 480-221-0455, home 480-659-5373, email walter.baines@gmail.com.

January 16, 2013

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to support Sheila's Academy across the street from my home. I have known Sheila and her family since they moved into the neighborhood over 23 years ago. I have been fortunate to get to know her both personally and professionally through the years. Her residence is well kept and Sheila is always mindful of the neighbors concerns.

She runs her program in the morning and afternoon after most neighbors have left for work and she ends it prior to most of them coming home. I know in the past she even changed her program hours to accommodate a neighbor who worked the night shift. Her children put on a few holiday shows for their parents where you will see more cars than usually, however they only last a couple hours and everything is back to normal. The parents I have met have always been respectful and considerate.

I support and encourage her efforts in running a successful small business.

Sincerely,

Carol Evans

Carol Evans
2738 W. Highland St.
Chandler, AZ 85224



Sheila's Academy

Gerl, Jan to: jodie.novak@chandleraz.gov
Cc: "extrabusy2@cox.net"

01/15/2013 09:49 PM

From: "Gerl, Jan" <jan.gerl@stryker.com>
To: "jodie.novak@chandleraz.gov" <jodie.novak@chandleraz.gov>
Cc: "extrabusy2@cox.net" <extrabusy2@cox.net>

Hello

My Son attends Sheila's Academy preschool in Chandler. Sheila Schmidt is providing an excellent educational setting for our child and he is thriving at her school. Her home is neatly and appropriately set up in a way that is conducive to learning. Sheila is also a responsible, respectful citizen who is always cognizant of being a good neighbor.

Feel free to contact me with questions.

Thank you.

Jan Gerl
Director Financial Reporting
Stryker Sustainability Solutions
1810 W. Drake Drive
Tempe, AZ 85283
t:480-763-5313
f:480-763-2963
c:480-754-9499
jan.gerl@stryker.com



Sheila's Academy - Minds in Motion

Elizabeth Capps to: jodie.novak@chandleraz.gov
Cc: "Ms. Sheila"

01/14/2013 02:24 PM

From: Elizabeth Capps <emc_psyd@yahoo.com>
To: "jodie.novak@chandleraz.gov" <jodie.novak@chandleraz.gov>
Cc: "Ms. Sheila" <extrabusy2@cox.net>
Please respond to Elizabeth Capps <emc_psyd@yahoo.com>

Dear Ms. Novak,

It is with great pleasure that I write this email on behalf of Sheila's Academy - Minds in Motion. I first became aware of the school when we received her required letter five years ago as we live on the next street over. At the time, our son was only one year old. I was excited to investigate this wonderful neighborhood resource when it was time to select a preschool for him. After visiting the school, there was no question, it was the place for us. Our son has been attending Sheila's Academy since he was 2.5 years old and is now currently a kindergarten student with her. It is an incredible learning environment in which our son has thrived. His academic levels are well-about grade level and we credit this to the nurturing academic environment at Sheila's Academy. We plan to enroll our daughter in the 2013-2014 school year for her first year of preschool.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Capps-Conkle

2709 W. Gila Lane

Chandler, AZ 85224

480-440-6831

emc_psyd@yahoo.com

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Sheila's Academy - Minds in Motion

Alexis Cabrera to: Jodie.Novak

Cc: extrabusy2

01/14/2013 02:29 PM

From: Alexis Cabrera <arcabrera79@gmail.com>
To: Jodie.Novak@chandleraz.gov
Cc: extrabusy2@cox.net

To whom it may concern,

I wanted to send a short noting stating some of the reasons that I chose Sheila's Academy - Minds in Motion as the preschool I wanted to send my children to. The school was recommended to me by a neighbor who had her son there at the time. Soon after I went to meet Sheila and visited the school. I had a long list of questions (it was my first child I was finding a preschool for) and Sheila took the time to answer all of them and I was impressed by everything I found out. Some of the things I was looking for was a school in close proximity to my house (I live just a few streets South of the school), a high teacher to student ration, proven success of the students, a focus on math and reading, and of course something affordable. Sheila's Academy met all of these expectations. Extra icing on the cake was that the school was Montessori, Christian based, offers Spanish classes and offers organic nutritional snacks.

My daughter spent her two years of preschool at Sheila's Academy and now my three year old son attends the school. Over these three years I have gotten to know the teachers, the students, and the parents. Because the school is smaller than most schools, all of the parents and students can participate in events together (field trips, outside birthday parties, bringing a meal to another when they are sick, etc.).

I'm so blessed that I found Sheila's Academy and I'm looking forward to sending my son there again next year.

Thank you,
Alexis R. Cabrera



Sheila's Academy- Minds in Motion
Kendra Sirignano to: jodie.novak

01/10/2013 07:24 PM

From: Kendra Sirignano <kendra2024@hotmail.com>
To: <jodie.novak@chandleraz.gov>

To whom it may concern,

I just wanted to send a brief email praising Sheila's Academy for the fine school she has maintained through the years. My children, Nico and Mia, have attended her school since August 2012 and they look forward to going each and every time. As a parent, I couldn't ask for a better school environment or more qualified, ambitious, caring teachers. I love the small class sizes, the home atmosphere and the quality of education my children are receiving. Of course, the safety the home provides is of utmost importance to me and I will be keeping them there through kindergarten.

Thank you,
Kendra Simpson