



REPORT TO PLANNING COMMISSION

CITY OF ARNOLD

APPLICATION NUMBER: 2019-42

APPLICATION NAME: MUSTARD SEED PRESCHOOL

APPLICANT NAME: Pamela L. Steinkamp
7720 Old Lemay Ferry Rd
Barnhart, MO 63012

PROPERTY OWNER NAME: St. Mark United Church of Christ
1861 Missouri State Rd
Arnold MO, 63010

APPLICANT'S REQUEST: The applicant is seeking a Conditional Use Permit to allow for the operation of a preschool.

STREET ADDRESS: 1861 Missouri State Rd

SITE LOCATION: Along West side of Missouri State Rd, between Sherwood Elementary and Woodlands Nursing & Rehab

ZONING DISTRICT: "R-1" Residential

PARCEL ID: 01-9.0-30.0-2-002-004

TOTAL SITE AREA: ± 2.94 acres

MEETING DATE: November 12, 2019

REPORT DATE: November 5, 2019

CASE MANAGER: Sarah Turner

RECOMMENDATION: **APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS**



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DESCRIPTION OF EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS

The approximately 2.94 acre parcel is along West side of Missouri State Rd, between Sherwood Elementary and Woodlands Nursing & Rehab. The subject parcel is owned by St. Mark's Church, as well as two adjacent lots to the south (1815 and 1825 Ridgeway Dr). The property is zoned "R-1" Residential and has the St. Mark's Church building, parking lot, and large grass yard. The property is accessed by Missouri State Road and Ridgeway Drive, with the main parking lot accessed by only Ridgeway Drive.

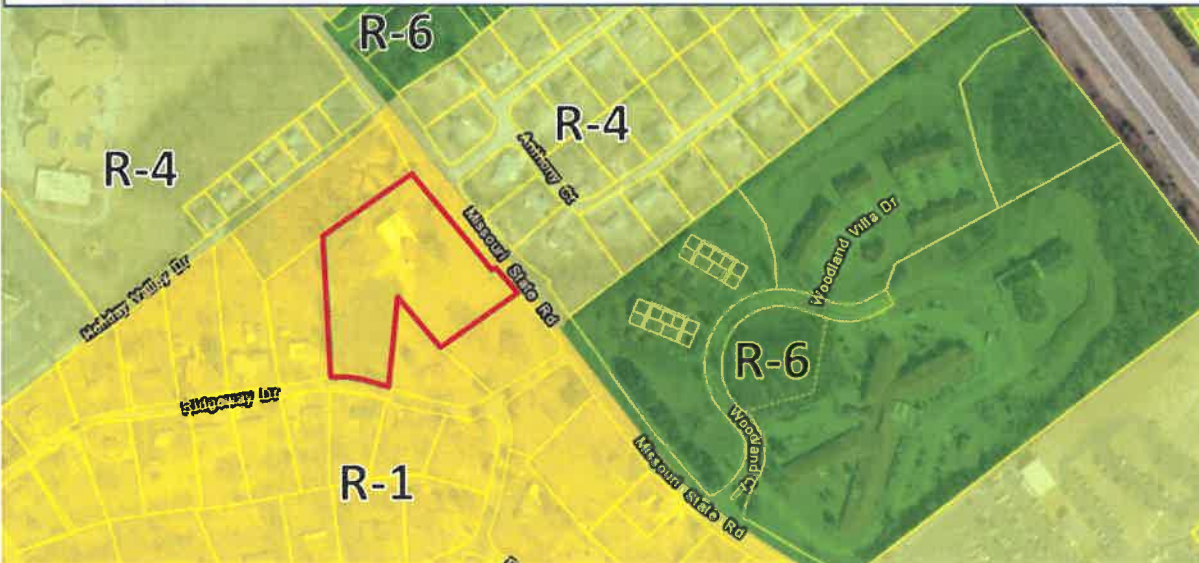
SITE HISTORY

This site is the location of St. Mark United Church of Christ. It is partially described as being Lots 2 and 6 of Maxville Terrace, which was platted in the early 1950s. The chapel was constructed in 1964, prior to the City's incorporation. The church was expanded sometime in the 1980s or 1990s and has since gone unchanged.

LAND USE AND ZONING CONTEXT MATRIX

DIRECTION	EXISTING LAND USE	ZONING DISTRICT	COMMENTS
North	Residential; Institutional	R-1; R-4; R-6	Single- and three-family dwellings; Sherwood Elementary
East	Residential	R-4; R-6	Single-family dwellings; Woodlands Nursing & Rehab
South	Residential	R-1	Single-family dwellings
West	Residential	R-1	Single-family dwellings

ZONING MAP



Mustard Seed Preschool

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ZONING REQUEST/DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

The applicant is requesting a Conditional Use Permit to allow for the operation of a preschool in the basement of St. Mark's Church at 1861 Missouri State Rd.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN CONSISTENCY REVIEW

A consistency review of the goals, objectives, and policies of the Comprehensive Plan, as they relate to the current request, follows:

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES:

LAND USE POLICY 9.1 APPLY COMPATIBLE USES: COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENTS SHOULD BE COMPATIBLE WITH NEARBY DEVELOPMENT AND ADEQUATELY BUFFERED TO MITIGATE ADVERSE IMPACTS ON RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS.

HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOOD POLICY 1.2 ACCESS TO FACILITIES: NEW COMMUNITY FACILITIES SUCH AS SCHOOLS, PARKS, AND LIBRARIES SHOULD BE LOCATED WITHIN OR IMMEDIATELY ADJACENT TO RESIDENTIAL AREAS AND LINKED WITH SIDEWALKS TO PROMOTE WALKING.

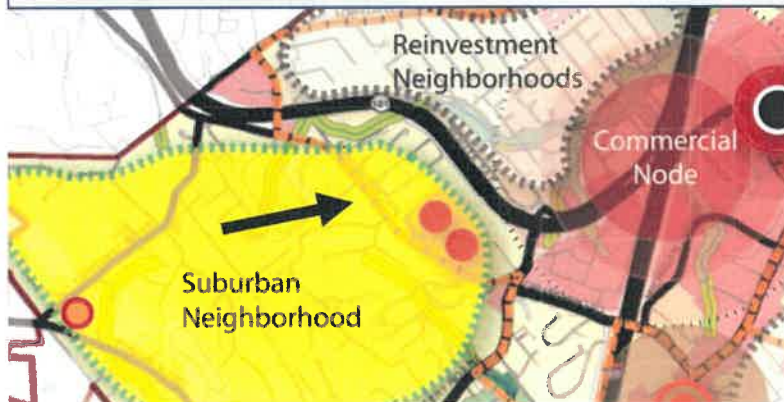
HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOOD POLICY 3.2 MITIGATE IMPACTS: PROTECT THE CHARACTER AND LIVABILITY OF ESTABLISHED RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS BY MINIMIZING SPILL-OVER IMPACTS FROM ADJACENT COMMERCIAL AREAS AND INCREMENTAL EXPANSION OF BUSINESS ACTIVITIES INTO RESIDENTIAL AREAS.

CITY PLANNER'S COMMENTS

Policies LU-9.1, NH-1.2, and NH-3.2 are substantially satisfied as follows:

Substantially Satisfied: The proposed Conditional Use Permit would allow for the operation of a preschool in the basement of an existing church. St Mark's is located on a large lot and has landscape buffering to the adjacent residential uses. This location is highly accessible to families and children in this suburban neighborhood as well as Missouri State Rd. The character of the neighborhood should be minimally impacted.

FUTURE LAND USE MAP:



Satisfied: The proposed conditional use aligns with the FLUM designation for the property as a suburban neighborhood. Schools and churches are regularly found in such areas throughout the City.



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BACKGROUND

The subject property is the location of St. Mark's United Church of Christ. The property is zoned "R-1" Residential, which allows for preschools on a conditional basis. The tenant space is the basement of the church and can be accessed from both Missouri State Rd or Ridgeway Dr.

Pamela L. Steinkamp, the applicant, is the owner and operator of Mustard Seed Preschool. The school was previously located in Imperial, Missouri at the Rock Presbyterian Church. The school had operated out of the upstairs of Rock Presbyterian since 1977. In August 2019, the applicant went through the proper procedures (i.e., business license application, property maintenance inspections) to move operation of the school into St. Mark's Church at the subject property. In early September, after these procedures were followed and a temporary occupancy permit was issued, a sign complaint brought the attention of City Staff to the fact that a preschool such as this should have obtained a Conditional Use Permit prior to beginning operation. Due to this fact being missed by City Staff during previous inspections and review, the application fee for this Conditional Use Permit was waived and the applicant was allowed to operate the business in the meantime as the school year had already begun. The application was submitted in early October 2019.

PLANNING AND ZONING ANALYSIS

When reviewing applications for Conditional Use Permits, or amendments thereto, the Planning Commission is required to hold a hearing, review, and make recommendations and report to the City Council.

The applicant is a current tenant seeking a Conditional Use Permit to allow for the operation of a preschool in the basement of St. Mark's United Church of Christ at 1861 Missouri State Rd.

CONSISTENT WITH GOOD PLANNING PRACTICE

The Mustard Seed Preschool is described by the applicant to be "an educational setting for 2½ - 5 yr old who attend classes 1 to 3 [half] days per week" (Exhibit C, Pg. 2 of Applicant Narrative). This fits the Code's description of a nursery school and day nursery: "A program operated by a person or organization with the primary function of providing an educational program for preschool-age children for no more than four (4) hours per child per day." The property where the applicant's preschool is located is within a "R-1" Residential District, which allows for nursery schools and day nurseries on a conditional basis. Mustard Seed Preschool must obtain a Conditional Use Permit to continue operation at this location.

Prior to an October 2006 amendment of Ordinance 14.2, nursery schools and day nurseries were a use permitted by right in residential districts of the City. This October 2006 amendment made nursery schools and day nurseries, such as preschools, a conditional use in every district

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PLANNING AND ZONING ANALYSIS - CONTINUED

where the use had been previously permitted (all “R” Residential Districts and “MHD” Mobile Home). Many other houses of worship within the City have affiliated or un-affiliated preschools on their premises that pre-date this ordinance change, and are therefore legal pre-existing non-conforming uses.

In the Future Land Use Map from Arnold’s Comprehensive Plan, this area is designated as a suburban neighborhood. It is consistent with the intent of the Comprehensive Plan’s policies to allow for family-oriented and child-oriented land uses such as houses of worship and schools to locate within residential neighborhoods for the convenience of families and parents of school-aged children. As such, the goals, objectives, and policies of the Zoning Code Ordinance and Comprehensive Plan are substantially met with this proposal.

DETRIMENT TO PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT AND USES WITHIN THE DISTRICT

The Mustard Seed Preschool is currently operating in the basement of St. Mark’s Church with a temporary occupancy permit. The applicant’s narrative (Exhibit C) indicates that they do not believe that the preschool is going to be detrimental to other developments in the district due to the rooms—previously empty or used for Sunday School—being in the basement and the financial benefit the preschool will provide to the church through rent payments.

Current enrollment ranges from 55 to 20 children. This varies by weekday and if the class is held in the morning or afternoon. Each of the 4 classrooms has 2 teachers. The enrollment child/adult ratio tops out at about 6/1 for younger children (2 ½ to 3 year olds) and 8/1 for the older children (3 ½ to 4 year olds). The maximum for any of the classrooms is 9/1. The City of Arnold and its Planning Commission is not the authority to determine class sizes; these figures have been provided to Commissioners for context. There is very little risk of the small children running away or getting lost, as the part-time nature of the school means that there are no scheduled outdoor activities. Additionally, the children are picked up and dropped off by

FIGURE 1: 3D VIEW OF 1861 MO-STATE RD, LOOKING NORTH; ENTRANCE CIRCLED IN YELLOW





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PLANNING AND ZONING ANALYSIS - CONTINUED

parents or guardians at the door of the child’s assigned room in the church basement. The entrance parents will use to access the basement is in the rear near the parking lot, shown in Figure 1 on the previous page.

There are two regulations on nursery schools or day nurseries required by the “R-1” Residential District, besides the need for a Conditional Use Permit to operate. The approximately 2.94 acre lot meets the 1 acre minimum size requirement. The other regulation refers to the minimum number of parking spaces. St. Mark’s Church has 65 parking spaces. Churches must provide 1 parking space per 4 seats in the auditorium and nursery schools and day nurseries must provide 1 space per classroom and separate office. With 177 seats in the sanctuary/auditorium and 4 classrooms for the preschool (See Exhibit B, Site Plan), 49 total parking spaces are required for the two separate uses. The 65 existing spaces are more than sufficient for the need.

Staff recommends including a condition of use to speak to the fact that approval for a Conditional Use Permit does not supersede the need for Mustard Seed Preschool to have other local, state, or federal approval as a pre-kindergarten educational institution. As proposed, Staff finds that the preschool satisfies the requirement that it can be operated in a manner that is not detrimental to permitted developments and uses in the district, subject to the above condition.

VISUAL COMPATIBILITY WITH PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT AND USES IN SURROUNDING AREA

The Mustard Seed Preschool’s effect on the visual compatibility of the church and surrounding area is limited, with the exception of the sign. The applicant installed the sign, shown in Figure 2, without a permit. The City then received a complaint, which was the trigger for the second wave of review from City Staff where it was found that the preschool was going to need a Conditional Use Permit. The relevant code sections for signs in residential zones is as follows:

FIGURE 2: MUSTARD SEED PRESCHOOL SIGN AT 1815 RIDGEWAY DR. (OCT. 2019)



Mustard Seed Preschool

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PLANNING AND ZONING ANALYSIS - CONTINUED

"For permitted non-residential uses, one (1) freestanding sign not to exceed forty-eight (48) square feet in sign area" and "All allowed freestanding signs shall have a maximum height of six (6) feet and shall have a setback of fifteen (15) feet from any public right-of-way."

The 10.5 square-foot Mustard Seed Preschool sign was installed without a permit on an existing directional sign for the main St. Mark's Church parking lot, at the corner of Ridgeway Dr and Missouri State Rd (1815 Ridgeway Dr, also owned by the church). The St. Mark's parking sign is 5 square feet and meets the City's Sign Code for maximum size of directional signage (9 square feet). A representative of the applicant (Larry Steinkamp, husband) had stated at the time that the sign's purpose was primarily to direct parents to the correct church entrance. However, Staff interpreted the sign to be primarily an advertisement for the school and therefore not directional, due to the size of the logo and listed contact information.

Based on the above discussion, Staff find that the Mustard Seed Preschool sign is not directional and falls under the regulations listed in italics on Page 7. As a use separate from the church, Mustard Seed Preschool is allowed one (1) freestanding sign not to exceed 48 square feet, and such a sign must be setback from any public right-of-way by 15 feet. The size requirement is met, however the setback is questionable. According to online mapping tools and field observations, the sign is located about 15 feet from the edge of pavement. However, the public right-of-way is at the property line, not the pavement. The parcel lines on the City's online maps are not accurate and the City does not have a plat or survey on file for the property in question (1815 Ridgeway Dr, Maxville Terrace Lot 3).

Staff recommend a condition of use that signage for the preschool must be altered so that it follows applicable City codes related to signs, including but not limited to number, size, and setbacks as outlined above. Additionally, the Mustard Seed Preschool sign must be a separate sign from the directional parking sign for the church. With this condition of use, the proposed preschool meets the requirement for the use to remain visually compatible with permitted development and uses in the surrounding area.

ESSENTIALNESS OR DESIRABILITY TO THE CITY

The proposed use is a preschool that serves 2½ to 5 year olds who attend classes up to 3 half-days a week. In response to this review criteria, the applicant's narrative (Exhibit C) explains that Mustard Seed Preschool stands out from other similar services in that it is an affordable, stand-alone preschool. The narrative goes on to say that daycares may offer preschool services, but parents or guardians would have to pay the significantly higher price for a spot in the daycare for their child to attend the preschool. Aside from socializing the children with their peers, the subjects taught at the school include manners, motor skills, pre-math and reading, and critical thinking. Staff finds that affordable preschool education substantially meets the review requirement to be an essential and desired addition to the City to promote public health, safety, and general welfare to the City.



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FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATION

CONSISTENT WITH GOOD PLANNING PRACTICE

Staff finds that the proposed use as a preschool is deemed consistent with good planning practice .

DETRIMENT TO PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT AND USES WITHIN THE DISTRICT

Staff finds that the proposed use can be developed or operated in a manner that is not detrimental to the permitted developments or uses within the district, subject to conditions contained in Exhibit A.

COMPATIBLE WITH PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT AND USES IN SURROUNDING AREA

Staff finds that the proposed use can be developed or operated in a manner that is visually compatible with the permitted development and uses in the surrounding area, subject to conditions contained in Exhibit A.

ESSENTIALNESS OR DESIRABILITY TO THE CITY

Staff finds that the proposed use is deemed essential or desirable to preserve and promote the public health, safety, and general welfare to the City of Arnold.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff finds that the proposed Conditional Use Permit meets the review criteria and is in compliance with the Zoning Ordinance and Comprehensive Plan. Based on this finding, Staff requests favorable consideration of the application.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sarah Turner", written over a horizontal line.

Sarah Turner
Community Development Planner



ATTACHMENTS

EXHIBIT A: CONDITIONS OF USE

EXHIBIT B: SITE PLAN

EXHIBIT C: APPLICANT NARRATIVE

PHOTOGRAPHS OF SITE



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CONDITIONS

1. The freestanding sign for the preschool must be a separate, standalone sign.
2. Signage for the preschool shall be modified at the direction of Staff so that it complies with Chapter 415, Signs.
3. Approval for Conditional Use Permit does not supersede other local, state, or federal requirements.

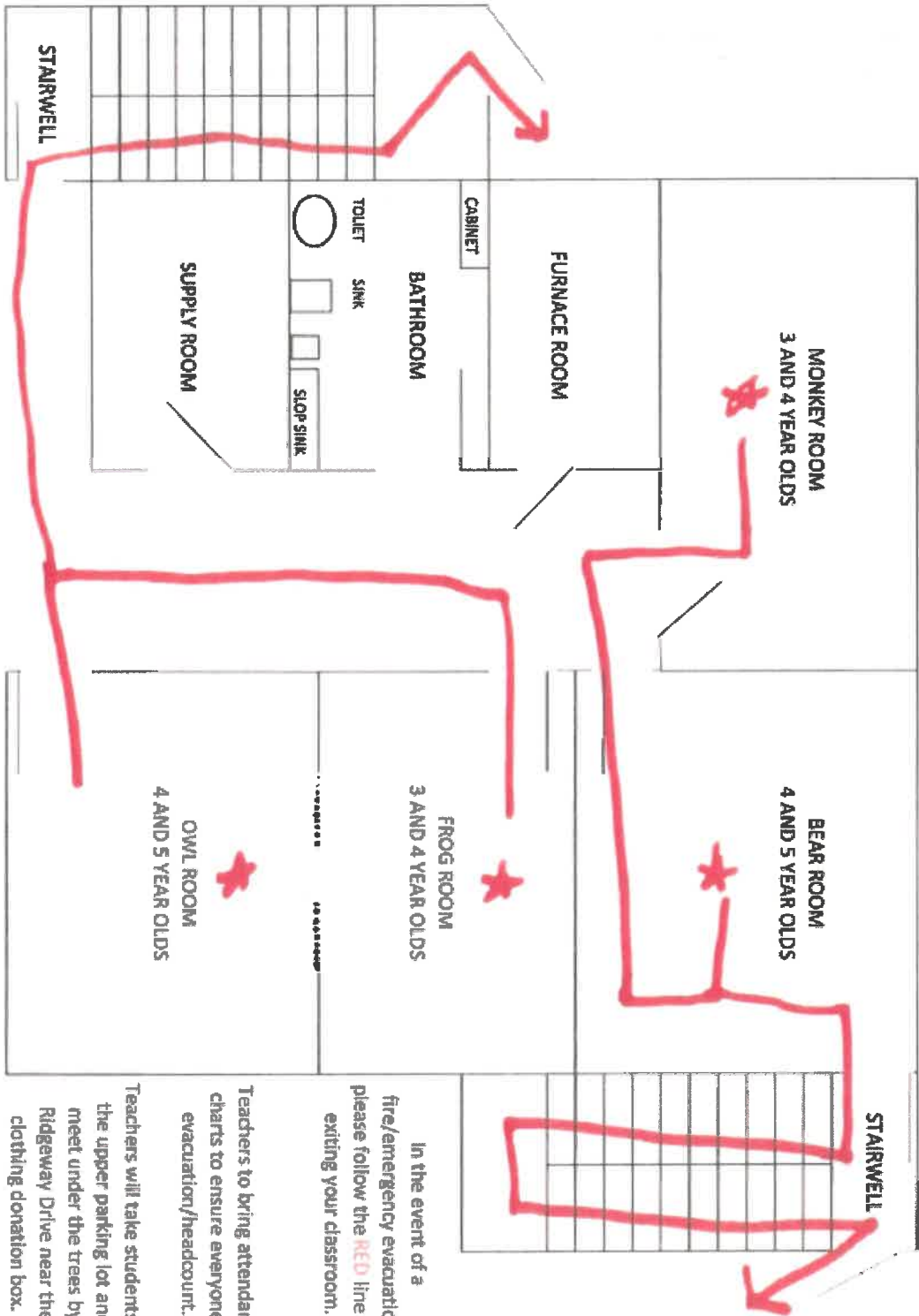
EXHIBIT A: STAFF RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS OF USE

Mustard Seed Preschool



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EMERGENCY EVACUATION FOR MUSTARD SEED PRESCHOOL



Non-ambulatory children will be carried out

In the event of a fire/emergency evacuation please follow the RED line for exiting your classroom.

Teachers to bring attendance charts to ensure everyone's evacuation/headcount.

Teachers will take students to the upper parking lot and meet under the trees by Ridgeway Drive near the clothing donation box.

EXHIBIT B: SITE PLAN



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Answers for The Mustard Seed Preschool
Hearing Nov 12, 2019

pg 1

- #8 a. We have been in business since 1977 and for all 41 years we held our classes in Rock Church in Imperial, MO. We leased the upstairs of the church. We have a great reputation and have provided Pre-K education to literally thousands of children over the years.
- b. The development can be operated in a manner that is not detrimental to other developments. We are using the rooms in the basement of St. Mark Church. The rooms were not being used except for Sunday school so now the church will be put to good use. We also will be paying the church \$1,400.00 a month to cover the costs of electric, paper supplies, the water, trash & cleaning each week & the use of the 4 classrooms and the storage space. The money will greatly help the church and their financial needs.
- c. The area is visually compatible because we did not change anything outside the church. We did post a small sign with our logo on it on the corner of the property but we placed it on an already existing sign post.

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Pg 2

d. Mustard Seed preschool is absolutely essential and desirable to preserve and promote the public health, safety, and general welfare of the City of Arnold in my opinion. We are one of very few actual preschools left in Jefferson County. There are many day cares who do some education during the day but families have to pay the cost of a day care position in order to get a spot in the preschool programs. That can be anywhere from \$130 per week to \$160 per week depending on the center they choose.

We are strictly an educational setting for 2 1/2 - 5 yr old who attend classes 1 to 3 1/2 days per week & the tuition is much more affordable. For one 1/2 day per week it is only \$40 per month. For 2 1/2 days per week \$80 per month, and 3 1/2 days per week \$105 per month.

Our students are taught all the skills they need to be successful in school and in life generally. They are taught how to appropriately act & interact socially, how to control their emotions, how to use manners & be responsible for their actions. We also teach them small & large motor skills, pre math, pre-reading, physical health, science, critical thinking, etc.

EXHIBIT C: APPLICANT NARRATIVE PG. 2

2019-42 CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT APPLICATION



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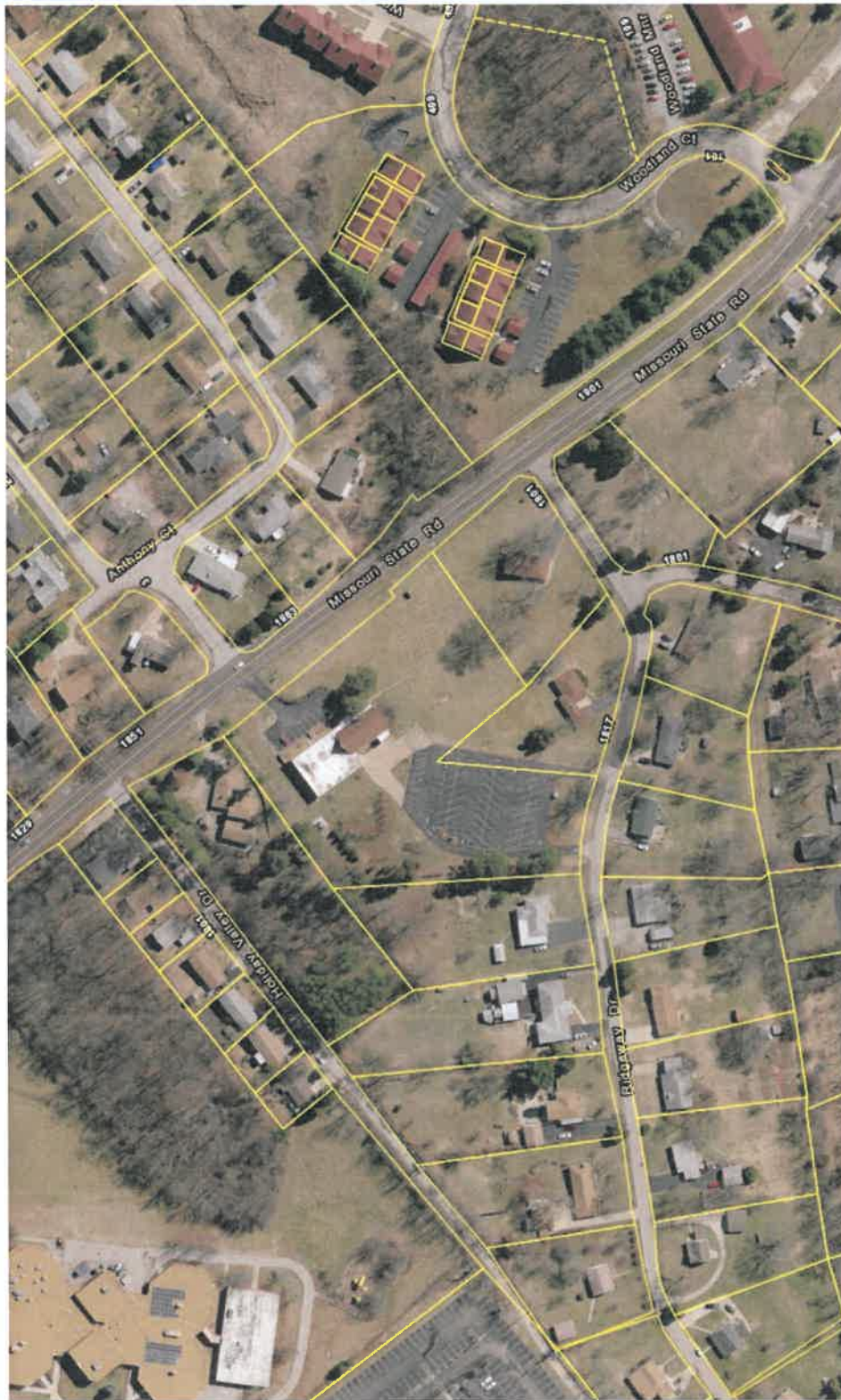
d. (continued)

Preparing children for kindergarten gives them an amazing jump start in their educational career. The kindergarten teachers often tell us that they want the children from Mustard Seed in their classes because they are so well prepared.

We have families who bring their children to us from all over Jefferson County. The adults who bring their children from neighboring towns often drop them off and go back to the other businesses in Arnold and shop there. Some use the Arnold Rec Center and other gyms in the area. Many get haircuts and car repairs also.

I believe we are bringing a great attribute to Arnold in many ways!

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SATELLITE IMAGE OF SUBJECT PROPERTY AND SURROUNDING AREA WITH PARCEL LINES

2019-42 CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT APPLICATION



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PHOTO OF ENTRANCE USED BY PRESCHOOL TAKEN DURING AUG. 2019 PROPERTY INSPECTION

Mustard Seed Preschool

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STREETVIEW FROM MAR. 2012 COMPARED TO CURRENT SIGNS (OCT. 30, 2019)

2019-42 CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT APPLICATION