November 12, 2026

ITEM NO.: 12 FILE NO.: Z-7225-B

NAME: Gerladine Johnson Montessori School – Revised POD

LOCATION: 9301 N. Rodney Parham Road

DEVELOPER:

Grace Presbyterian Church (Owner)
9301 N. Rodney Parham Road
Little Rock, AR 72227

OWNER/AUTHORIZED AGENT:

Melanie Gibson (Agent)
9301 N. Rodney Parham Road
Little Rock, AR 72227

SURVEYOR/ENGINEER:

Holloway Engineering
200 Casey Drive
Maumelle, AR 72113

AREA: 3.39 acres NUMBER OF LOTS: 1 FT. NEW STREET: 0 LF

WARD: 4

CURRENT ZONING: POD

VARIANCE/WAIVERS:

None requested.

A. PROPOSAL/REQUEST/APPLICANT'S STATEMENT:

The applicant proposes to operate an elementary school for up to fifty-five (55) students ranging from toddlers through fourth grade within the existing building (Grace Presbyterian Church), on Lot 1 of the overall site. All remaining aspects of the previously approved POD will remain in place.

B. EXISTING CONDITIONS:

The site is located near the southwest corner of N. Rodney Parham Road and Reservoir Road. Properties in the surrounding area contain a mixture of zoning and uses.

C. NEIGHBORHOOD NOTIFICATIONS:

All owners of property within 300 feet of the site and all neighborhood associations registered with the City of Little Rock were notified of the public hearing.

D. ENGINEERING COMMENTS (PLANNING):

1. All documents shall be prepared based on the current Arkansas Fire Prevention Codes, City of Little Rock Municipal codes and ordinances, and current Stormwater Management and Drainage Manual.

ENGINEERING COMMENTS (PUBLIC WORKS):

1. Public Works is recommending approval of the school with a student enrollment not to exceed 55 students. With an increase in the student enrollment greater than 55 students, the applicant is required to prepare a revised traffic report and return to the Planning Commission and Board of Directors for approval.

E. UTILITIES/FIRE DEPARTMENT/PARKS/COUNTY PLANNING:

Little Rock Water Reclamation Authority: No comments.

Entergy: No comments received.

Summit Utilities: No comments.

AT & T: No comments received.

Central Arkansas Water:

1. All Central Arkansas Water requirements in effect at the time of request for water service must be met.

Fire Department:

Maintain Access:

Fire Hydrants.

Maintain fire apparatus access roads at fire hydrant locations as per Appendix D of the 2012 Arkansas Fire Prevention Code Vol. 1 **Section D103.1 Access road width with a hydrant**. Where a fire hydrant is located on a fire apparatus access road, the minimum road width shall be 26 feet, exclusive of shoulders.

Grade

Maintain fire apparatus access roads as per Appendix D of the 2012 Arkansas Fire Prevention Code Vol. 1 **Section D103.2 Grade**. **Fire apparatus access roads shall not exceed 10 percent in grade except as approved by the fire chief. If the grade exceeds 10 percent, approval will be denied and the applicant must submit request to be reviewed by Fire Chief for Approval.**

Loading

Maintain fire apparatus access road design as per Appendix D of the 2012 Arkansas Fire Prevention Code Vol. 1 **Section D102.1 Access and loading.** Facilities, buildings or portions of buildings hereafter constructed shall be accessible to fire department apparatus by way of an approved fire apparatus access road with asphalt, concrete or other approved driving surface capable of supporting the imposed load of fire apparatus weighing at least 75,000 pounds.

Commercial and Industrial Developments – 2 means of access. - Maintain fire apparatus access roads as per Appendix D of the 2012 Arkansas Fire Prevention Code Vol. 1

Section D104.1 Buildings exceeding three stories or 30 feet in height. Buildings or facilities exceeding 30 feet or three stories in height shall have at least two means of fire apparatus access for each structure.

Section D104.2 Building exceeding 62,000 square feet in area. Buildings or facilities having a gross building area of more than 62,000 square feet shall be provided with two separate and approved fire apparatus access roads.

> **Exception:** Projects having a gross building area of up to 124,000 square feet that have a single approved fire apparatus access road when all buildings are equipped throughout with approved automatic sprinkler systems.

D104.3 Remoteness. Where two fire apparatus access roads are required, they shall be placed a distance apart equal to not less than one half of the length of the maximum overall diagonal dimension of the lot or area to be served, measured in a straight line between accesses.

30' Tall Buildings - Maintain aerial fire apparatus access roads as per Appendix D of the 2012 Arkansas Fire Prevention Code Vol. 1 Section D105.1 – D105.4

D105.1 Where Required. Where the vertical distance between the grade plane and the highest roof surface exceeds 30', approved aerial fire apparatus access roads shall be provided. For the purposes of this section the highest roof surfaces shall be determined by measurement to the eave of a pitched roof, the intersection of a roof to the exterior wall, or the top of the parapet walls, whichever is greater.

D105.2 Width. Aerial fire apparatus access roads shall have a minimum unobstructed with of 26', exclusive of shoulders, in the immediate vicinity of the building or portion thereof.

D105.3 Proximity to building. At least one of the required access routes meeting this condition shall be located within a minimum of 15 feet and a maximum of 30 feet from the building and shall be positioned parallel to one entire side of the building. The side of the building on which the aerial fire apparatus access road is positioned shall be approved by the fire code official.

D105.4 Obstructions. Overhead utility and power lines shall not be located over the aerial fire apparatus access road or between the aerial fire apparatus road and the building. Other obstructions shall be permitted to be placed with the approval of the fire code official.

Dead Ends.

Maintain fire apparatus access roads at dead end locations as per Appendix D of the 2012 Arkansas Fire Prevention Code Vol. 1 Section D103.4 Dead Ends. Dead-end fire apparatus access roads in excess of 150 feet shall be provided with width and turnaround provisions in accordance with Table D103.4. Requirements for Dead-end fire apparatus access roads.

Gates

Maintain fire apparatus access road gates as per Appendix D of the 2012 Arkansas Fire Prevention Code Vol. 1 Section D103.5 Fire apparatus access

road gates. Gates securing the fire apparatus access roads shall comply with all of the following criteria:

1. Minimum gate width shall be 20 feet.
2. Gates shall be of swinging or sliding type.
3. Construction of gates shall be of material that allow manual operation by one person.
4. Gate components shall be maintained in an operable condition at all times and replaced or repaired when defective.
5. Electric gates shall be equipped with a means of opening the gate by fire department personnel for emergency access. Emergency opening devices shall be approved by the fire code official.
6. Manual opening gates shall not be locked with a padlock or chain and padlock unless they are capable of being opened by means of forcible entry tools or when a key box containing the keys to the lock is installed at the gate location.
7. Locking device specifications shall be submitted for approval \by the fire code official
8. Electric gate operators, where provided, shall be listed in accordance with UL 325.
9. Gates, intended for automatic operation, shall be designed, constructed and installed to comply with requirements of ASTM F 2200.

Parks and Recreation: No comments received.

F. BUILDING CODES/LANDSCAPE:

Building Code: No comments received.

Landscape: No comments.

G. TRANSPORTATION/PLANNING:

Rock Region Metro: No comments received.

Planning Division:

Land Use Plan:

The request is in Planning District 2, the Rodney Parham Planning District. The development principles for this district seek to preserve and stabilize the existing development while advocating for neo-traditional suburban development in areas

not yet developed. The Land Use Plan shows Public/Institutional (PI) for the application area. The Public/Institutional (PI) category includes public and quasi-public facilities that provide a variety of services to the community such as schools, libraries, fire stations, churches, utility substations, and hospitals.

To the north and west of the application area are areas designated for Commercial (C) uses and are characterized by restaurants, a grocery store, storage facilities, and strip commercial buildings. East of the application area is area designated for Office (O) uses and is characterized by strip office buildings. South of the application area is area designated for Residential Low Density (RL) uses and is characterized by single-family residences.

This site is not located in an Overlay District.

Master Street Plan:

North Rodney Parham Road is a Minor Arterial on the Master Street Plan. Minor Arterials are high volume roads designed to provide the connections to and through an urban area. Curb cuts should be minimized to allow for continuous traffic flow while still allowing some access to adjoining property. Deceleration Lanes are required. Standard Right-of-way (ROW) is 90 feet. Sidewalks are required on both sides. This street may require dedication of right-of-way and may require street improvements.

Bicycle Plan:

North Rodney Parham Road is on the Master Bike Plan as a Proposed Class II Bike Lane. Class II Bike Lanes provides a portion of the pavement for the sole use of bicycles.

Historic Preservation Plan:

The application, as shown, should have no effect on identified historic resources.

H. ANALYSIS:

The applicant proposes to operate an elementary school for up to fifty-five (55) students ranging from toddlers through fourth grade within the existing building (Grace Presbyterian Church), on Lot 1 of the overall site. All remaining aspects of the previously approved POD will remain in place.

The site is located near the southwest corner of N. Rodney Parham Road and Reservoir Road. Properties in the surrounding area contain a mixture of zoning and uses.

Access to the site is provided by an existing common access easement on Lot 1, near the southwest intersection of N. Rodney Parham Road and Reservoir Road. This driveway provides entryway to the overall site that will provide stacking for the pick-up/drop-off of students.

The applicant proposing no new construction. Existing buildings depicted on the survey, with exception of the northeast corner of the gymnasium, comply with code regarding required building setbacks.

The applicant submitted a Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) that was reviewed and approved by the Public Works Department. The TIA provides pick-up/drop-off for a maximum of fifty-five (55) students at any given time. The campus will utilize existing parking for staff and students associated with school operations and activities. Staff feels the existing parking is sufficient to serve the proposed use.

The applicant provided the following information regarding school operations:

"Grace Presbyterian Church is leasing four (4) classrooms in its facility to the Geraldine Johnson Montessori School at 9301 N. Rodney Parham Road, Little Rock, AR. Plans are for students to start school on Monday, August 24, 2026.

They are applying to update the POD zoning classification to include school use which will have no more than 55 students, in classes for toddlers through fourth grade. Carla Johnson, the executive director, met with DHS, the LRFD fire marshal and with the City of Little Rock Code Enforcement officers to ensure there are no violations. That's when it was discovered that the church needs to add the school classification to its planned development zoning.

A sign will also be installed at the church ingress and egress onto Rodney Parham showing that it is a right turn only to enter Rodney Parham Road.

Grace Presbyterian Church looks forward to a long relationship with the Geraldine Johnson Montessori School and assures the City of Little Rock that they will be an upstanding resident."

The newly proposed sign must comply with Section 36-553 of the City's Zoning Ordinance (signs allowed in office and institutional zones).

An existing dumpster is located near the southeast corner of the site. Any new dumpsters placed on the site must comply with Section 36-523 of the City's Zoning Ordinance.

Any new sight lighting must be low-level and directed away from adjacent properties.

Staff is supportive of the requested revised POD. Staff feels that this is a good location for a school facility to serve the community at large. The applicant is requesting no variances with this application. Staff feels that the proposed school will be a quality addition to the overall area and should have no adverse impact on the surrounding properties.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the requested revised POD, subject to compliance with the comments and conditions outlined in paragraphs D and E, and the staff analysis, of the agenda staff report.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION: (November 12, 2026)

The applicant was present. There were no objectors present. The application was placed on the Consent Agenda for approval as recommended by staff. There was a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion passed by a vote of **10** ayes, **0** nays, **0** absent and **1** open position. The application was approved.