



**Town of Atherton
Planning Department
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DATE: Continued from December 14, 2022 - Regular Planning Commission meeting for January 25, 2023

TO: The Planning Commission

FROM: Radha Hayagreev, Senior Planner

SUBJECT: Menlo College, 2022 Master Plan Update at 1000 El Camino Real (Assessor's Parcel Number: 070-360-100) (Permit number - MPL22-00003)

CEQA: The proposal has been determined to be exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) to CEQA Section 15301 Existing Facilities.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission accept the 2022 annual update from Menlo College.

BACKGROUND:

The Town of Atherton Zoning Ordinance includes a provision requiring the preparation of a master plan for private schools located in the PFS district. The Guidelines for School Master Plans state that each year, the private school shall provide input on the status of master plan preparation and implementation, and the Town Planner shall report to the Planning Commission on the status of the school master plan, its availability, and contents. Notice of the Commission meeting is required to be sent to all property owners within five hundred feet of the boundaries of the school.

Menlo College was established in 1927. Page 3 of the Master Plan update (Attachment 1) includes a summary of the school's history. Menlo College's Master Plan was first received by the Planning Commission on June 25, 2003. The Master Plan was subsequently updated and reviewed by the Planning Commission in 2004, 2008, 2009, 2010/2011, 2014, 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021.

ANALYSIS:

Attachment 1 is Menlo College's submittal for the 2022 Master Plan Update. This Update supplements the 2003 Master Plan including updates that were made in 2004 and 2010. Between 2004 and 2021, there was no new construction of any facilities. In 2020 the Town approved a Conditional Use Permit for a new residence hall designed to house up to 288 students who currently reside off campus. Construction of the residence hall began in 2021 and a temporary

certificate of occupancy was issued in September 2022. The Update also includes a discussion of the institution's response to the Covid-19 pandemic and impacts on enrollment and school functions.

Atherton Municipal Code (AMC) Section 17.36.050 includes suggested content of master plans as follows:

- A. Land uses, their location, and extent;
- B. Circulation patterns;
- C. Locations for parking and parking standards;
- D. Current enrollment projections and maximum enrollment anticipated;
- E. A list of possible facilities to be developed;
- F. A schedule or priority of development;
- G. Identification of historic or other unique facilities, heritage trees, and their disposition;
- H. Identification of uses and their days and hours of operation, including evenings; and
- I. Identification of other institutions or uses at the facility.

The 2022 Update content is consistent with the AMC suggested criteria as discussed below.

Land Uses: The 2022 Update includes a general description of campus land uses, locations and extent (page 9). With the temporary certificate of occupancy for the newest residence hall in fall of 2022, 855 students can be housed on campus. The College's "Camps & Conferences" program is discussed on page 10 including two "anchor" clients, the JCC Maccabi Youth Sports Camp (JCC) and the American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO) which provide the majority of the revenue base for camps and conferences.

Circulation and Parking: The 2022 Update includes a description of campus circulation patterns and of parking locations and number of spaces (pages 10-11). In addition, a description of traffic studies performed in 2019 and 2022 is included on pages 11-12, including factors attributed to the increase in the number of vehicle trips between 2019 and 22. The opening of the new residence hall is expected to reduce average daily trips since more students will have the opportunity to live on campus rather than commuting.

Facilities to be developed: The 2022 Update includes a general description of facilities to be developed (page 13) including upgrades to the Bowman Library and other campus facilities. It is noted that because of the shared ownership with Menlo School, Cartan Field development is subject to a separate planning process. The illustration in the document notes two existing baseball fields and an area designated for a multi-use field, bleachers, aquatics, tennis and parking. Another possible future development is the construction of new faculty and staff housing.

Historic facilities and Heritage trees: The 2022 Update addresses historic facilities and heritage trees on pages 14 and 15. There are two historic buildings on the campus, the Perry Stable building which was associated with the famous racehorse Phar Lap and the El Camino Residence Hall that was built shortly after the founding of the College. This section also includes a listing of campus trees. The inventory totals more than 300 trees. Eighty-nine trees have been planted in the last seven years, and there are 79 Heritage Trees on the campus.

Enrollment: Enrollment projections are provided on page 15. Covid-19 had an affect on enrollment, with a minor decline in enrollment during the first two years of the pandemic. The college resumed its growth path in Fall 2022 when it welcomed its largest incoming class. Historic Enrollment data is shown in the table below:

Academic Year	Fall Enrollment	Spring Enrollment
2009-2010	594	464
2010-2011	590	545
2011-2012	642	593
2012-2013	681	652
2013-2014	713	671
2014-2015	794	736
2015-2016	787	728
2016-2017	790	734
2017-2018	747	721
2018-2019	775	709
2019-2020	894	819
2020-2021	826	754
2021-2022	746	740
2022-2023	800	TBD

Current enrollment is 800 students with projected growth shown in the table below.

Academic Year	Enrollment
2023-2024	825
2024-2025	875
2025-2026	925
2026-2027	1,000

NOTICE AND PUBLIC OUTREACH

Legal advertisement of this hearing was published in *The Almanac* newspaper, 15 days prior to the hearing date. Notice of this application was mailed to all property owners within 500 feet of the subject property. To date, the Town has not received any public comment or inquiries on the application.

The 2022 Update contains a section entitled “Engaging Our Community” on pages 16 and 17. The text describes various ways the College reaches out to the community and neighbors. The College communicates with immediate neighbors in advance of campus events that might increase traffic or noise in the area and maintains a “welcome mat” for area residents to enjoy the campus as a place to walk dogs and exercise.

CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATION:

It is Staff’s professional opinion that the 2022 Master Plan Update submitted by Menlo College complies with the spirit and intent of the Town policies and ordinances related to Master Plans

for private schools. As recommended by staff in 2021, the College holds neighborhood meetings as least annually; the most recent meeting took place on October 19, 2022.

FORMAL MOTION:

I move that the Planning Commission accept the 2022 Menlo College Master Plan Update as submitted.

/s/ Radha Hayagreev

Radha Hayagreev, Senior Planner

Attachments:

1. Menlo College Master Plan Update 2022