

TWIN CITIES GERMAN IMMERSION SCHOOL

TCGIS = a great St. Paul school

TCGIS has called St. Paul its home since the beginning, and 46% of students live in St. Paul.

- TCGIS has grown from two sections in K-1 to a full K-8 school in 13 years, recently graduating 34 kids from 8th grade.
- TCGIS continually ranks near the top on MN test scores.
- TCGIS is the only German Immersion school in MN and the largest in North America.
- **Partnership with SPPS:** TCGIS feeds into **St Paul Central High School**, adding students to St Paul Public Schools District 625. Eighteen TCGIS students (53%) enrolled at Central High in 2018 and participate in an accelerated German instruction track geared towards TCGIS graduates.

Usable space!

- Improves accessibility
- Above grade cafeteria will have ample daylight.
- The new construction will improve comfort in learning spaces.
- The project includes 6 classrooms to provide the needed room for three sections in grades K-8, a cafeteria & dividable gym
- Additional small break out meeting space for RTI.
- Improves student safety and security.
- Beautiful outdoor spaces will be dedicated to public art.

TCGIS seeks approval for:

- Site Plan
- Variances
  - Building Height
  - Lot Coverage
  - Parking

Broad Community Support

- 12/5/2018 D-10 Land Use meeting voted overwhelmingly to support the variances. 200+ residents attended!

- 12/18/2018 - District 10 Community Council voted to approve ALL variances as applied for.

Variances for Height and Lot Coverage

- Variance for Height: 3’ 1”
- Variance for Maximum Lot Coverage: 1%
  - “The magnitude of those variances is small, and they are reasonable accomodations for an allowed use.”
  - Variances are consistent with comprehensive plan.

Variance 1 - Height: 3’ 1” Variance

- Floor levels of new building will align w/ existing, improving circulation and allowing the removal of transitions and interior lifts.
- Dramatically improve accessibility with addition of second elevator
- Current building stands 46’ 9”, or 38’ 6” at the roof midpoint compared to new building at 33’ 1’.

Variance 2 - Lot Coverage: 1% Variance

- 1% Variance allows the school to add 3,000 sq ft of much needed space
- **More efficient use of space, going from 12,000 sq ft useable space to 23,000 sq ft on similar footprint**
- Site stormwater management improves: Historically 65% lot covered by impervious surface, now down to 55% - meaning **LESS** storm water run-off into Lake Como.
- Site plan improves St Paul Comprehensive Plan points 2.2, 2.9, 3.9

Variance 3 - Parking: 37 Spot Variance

- 6 additional learning spaces = 6 additional staff
- Shared parking agreement adds 8 net parking spots
- Reduced surface lot ------>More playground and green space
    - Good for kids, good for our neighborhood, good for Lake Como
- Plan improves storm water management by removing impervious surface for landscaping and turf

Requested variance consistent with St. Paul's forward-thinking 2030 & 2040 Comp Plans

- Goal: Reduce parking lots, increase green space and incentivize alternative transportation

- Policy LU-13. Support strategies, as context and technology allow, to improve off-street parking efficiency, such as **shared parking agreements**, district ramps, car sharing, electric vehicle charging and **reduced parking minimums**.
- Policy LU-14. Ensure that **stand-alone parking uses are limited**, and that structured parking is mixed-use and/or convertible to other uses.
- Policy LU-45. Minimize the amount of surface parking in industrial districts through a **more efficient use of existing parking and development of shared parking**.

Community supports full 37 spot variance

- “The District 10 board specifically rejected an amendment for a 29-space variance.
- Discussion on the amendment suggests that board members **prefer a larger parking variance over requiring additional pavement** and a loss of green space on the school property.” - Michael Kuchta

Children benefit from more green space!

Traffic Study Supports Full Parking Variance

- “Parking demands from the TCGIS can be accommodated on-street on the surrounding roadways.” (Page 1) of Traffic Study Executive Summary
- “...there is ample on-street parking availability of over 200 spaces immediately around the TCGIS building to accommodate 37 vehicles from the TCGIS.” (Page 8) of Traffic Study Executive Summary







Morning and Mid-**school day** parking showing **copious** amounts of available parking













Morning and Mid-**school day** parking showing **copious** amounts of available parking













Morning and Mid-**school day** parking showing **copious** amounts of available parking











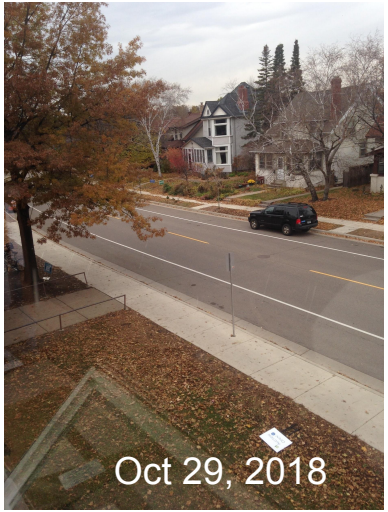


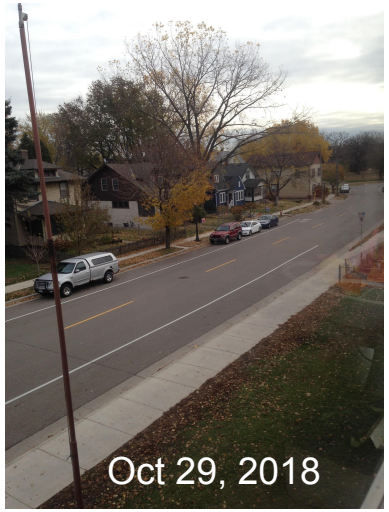
Morning and Mid-**school day** parking showing **ample** amounts of available parking



Morning and Mid-**school day** parking showing **copious** amounts of available parking

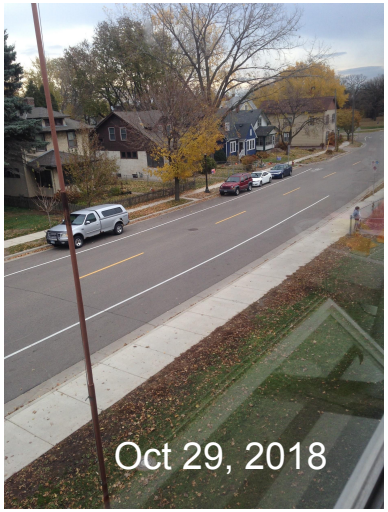


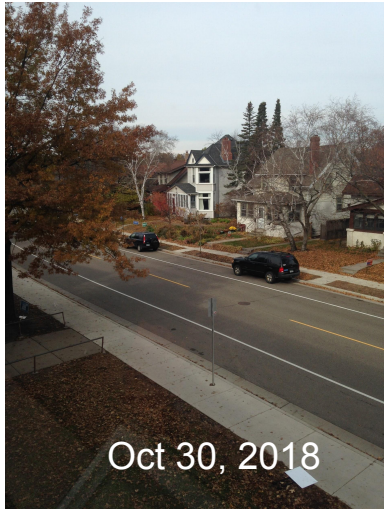






















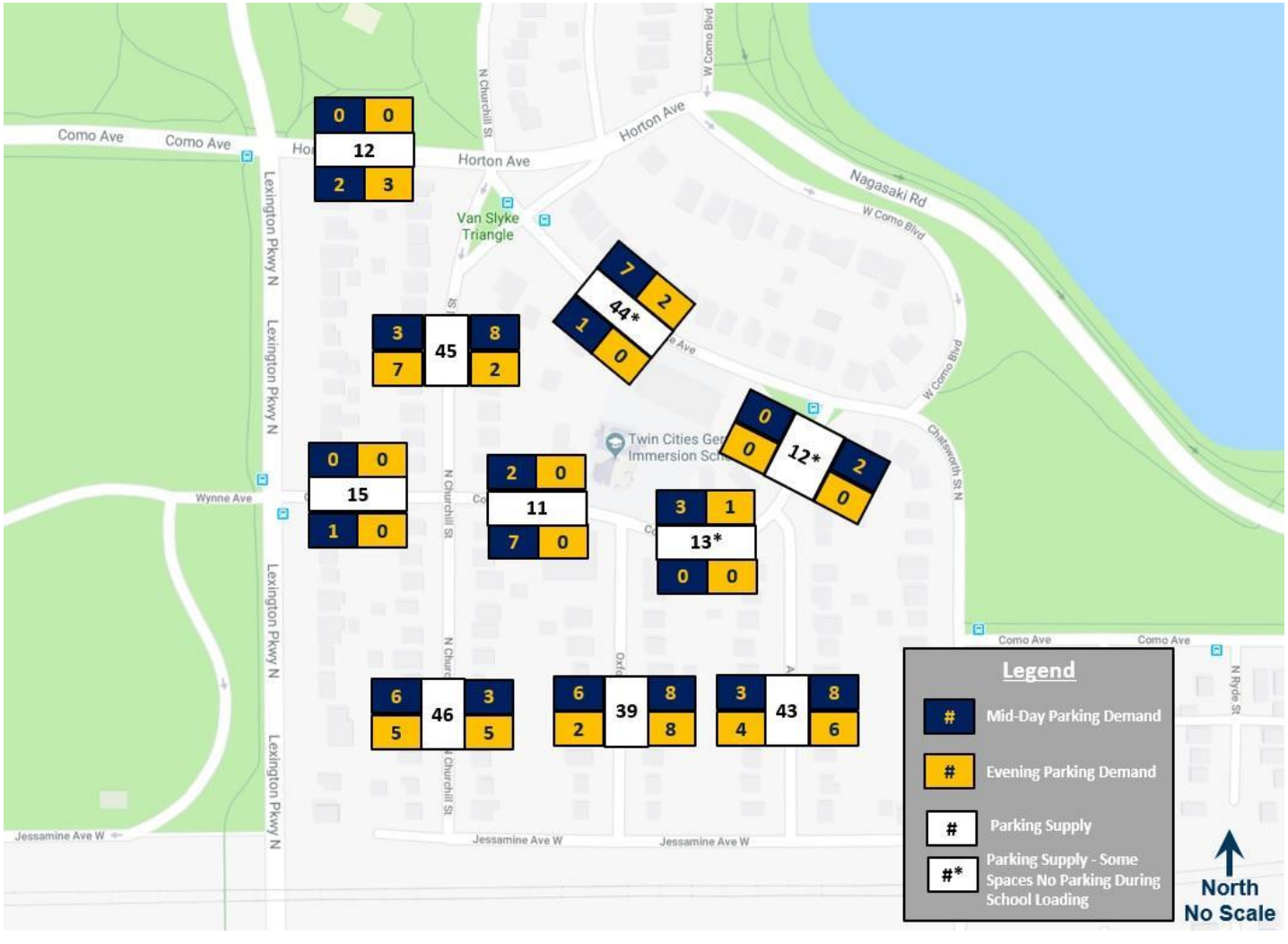
I took a walk today (12/18/2018.
Parking around TCGIS today at 2:20 PM








The view from the SE corner of the school's property highlights the cafeteria windows and increased play area.



- 280 available spaces within 500 feet of TCGIS.
- 25% of spaces used mid-day
- 16% used evening

Board of Zoning and Appeals precedent

Saint Anthony Park Elementary Jan 4, 2017

"C. Applicant - St. Paul Public Schools (#16-105467) Location - 2180 Knapp Street Zoning - 2) The required off-street parking for elementary schools is one space per full time employee, **4 off-street parking spaces exist on the property**; the project is not required to make up the existing parking deficit. The applicant is requesting a variance for 10 additional off-street parking spaces to accommodate the 10 new full time employees. Approved 6-0" (BZA minutes)

*SAP has 50 staff and 660 students

Response to Staff's proposed conditions on variances:

- TCGIS agrees with the following conditions:
  - "Approval of and monitoring by the Zoning Administrator of a shared parking agreement with the owners of the property at 1040 Como Avenue for 15 off-street spaces is required."
- TCGIS requests an amendment to the following condition:
  - "The applicant shall submit a traffic impact study (TIS) for final review and approval by Public Works, ~~and the implementation of any recommendations therein contained is required."~~ and will collaborate in good faith with Public Works to evaluate potential implementation of recommendations.
- TCGIS disagrees with the following conditions:
  - "Twin Cities German Immersion School shall have not more than 86.5 full-time equivalent employees at 1031 Como Avenue"
  - "Those plans shall include seven (7) additional off-street parking spaces but shall otherwise be in substantial compliance with the plan submitted and approved as part of this application."

Response to Staff's proposed conditions for site plan:

- TCGIS agrees with the following conditions:
  - "Provide an obscuring wood fence at least 80% opaque and 6' in height along the east property line to buffer the abutting properties."

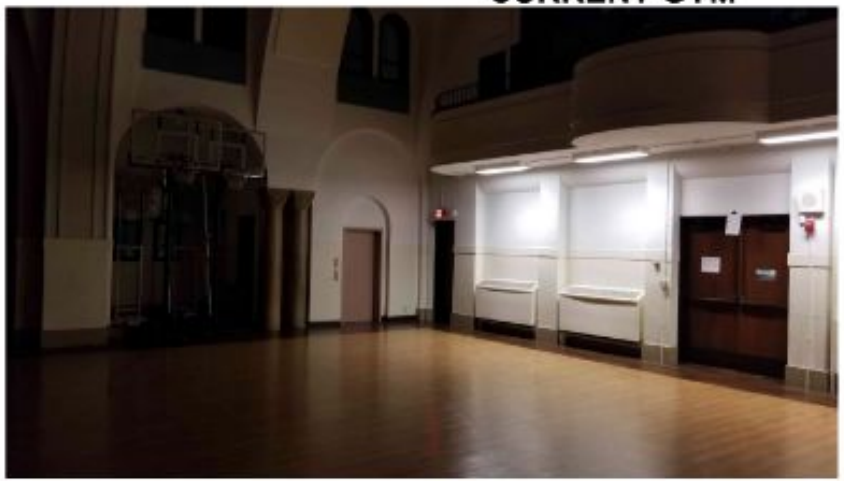
- TCGIS requests an amendment to the following condition:
  - "~~Acceptance of the Traffic Impact Study by the Public Works Transportation Planning and Safety Division.~~ Collaborate in good faith with Public Works Transportation Planning and Safety Division to evaluate potential implementation of recommendations.

- TCGIS and district 10 disagree with the proposed parking variance condition - full parking variance is better for the children, the neighborhood and the environment.

  - ~~"No net loss of off-street parking within the property. A parking area to the replace the seven (7) off-street parking spaces proposed for removal shall be subject to Zoning Code standards and design and receive Zoning Administrator review and approval."~~

Why TCGIS students need an updated facility?

CURRENT GYM



Obstructed courts
Small courts
Only one gym class at a time
Hardwalls
Poor acoustics
Poor insulation

NEW GYM



Improves accessibility for all abilities
Clear courts
Regulation size court
Dividable for two classes
Padded walls
Improved acoustics
Energy efficient and environmentally friendly

CURRENT GYM STORAGE

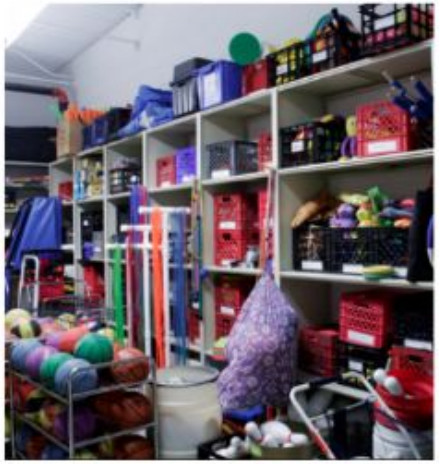


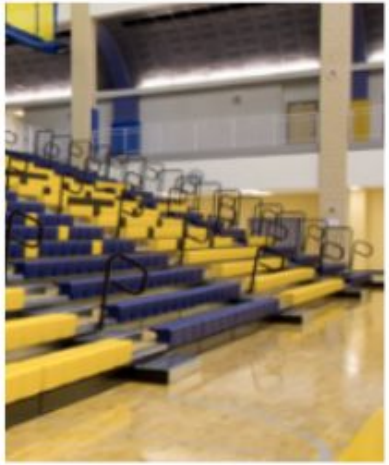




Storage spaces open to children
Dark, unsafe, hard to supervise spaces
No room for bleachers
Insufficient room for gym equipment

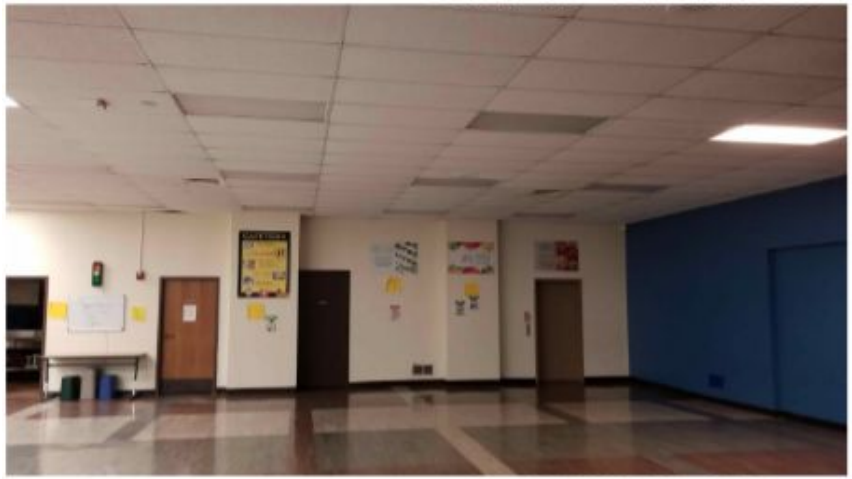
NEW GYM STORAGE





Locked storage rooms
Well lit, safe spaces
Built-in bleachers
Dedicated equipment storage room

CURRENT LUNCHROOM



No windows
Difficult accessibility
Hand-washing separated from food line
Insufficient space for eating
Small kitchen

NEW LUNCHROOM



Great natural light
Direct access to playground
Floor level aligned with 1st floor, no ramped or elevator required
Hand-washing in-line with food service
Enlarged eating space
Enhanced, expanded kitchen

CURRENT SMALL-GROUP CLASSROOM



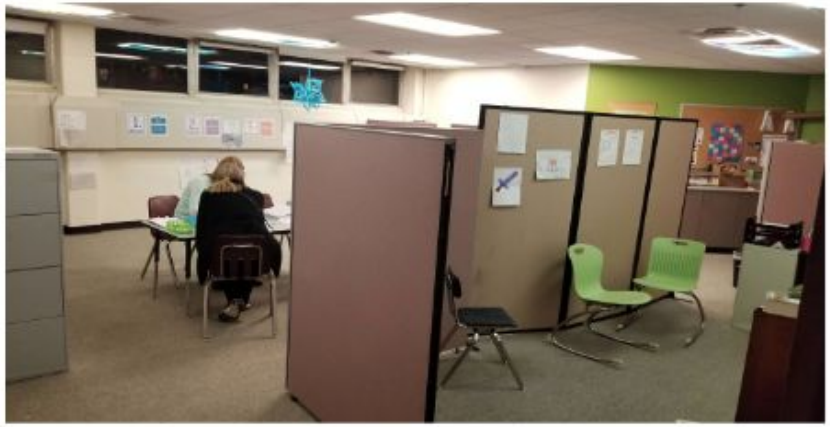
Poor lighting
Lack of privacy
Classrooms are located in hallways
Headphones are required for noise
Difficult learning environment

NEW SMALL-GROUP CLASSROOM



Dedicated rooms for small groups
Quiet spaces for learning
Private rooms
Inspiring learning environment
New spaces are best practices for Real Time Intervention (RTI)

CURRENT SMALL GROUP SPACE



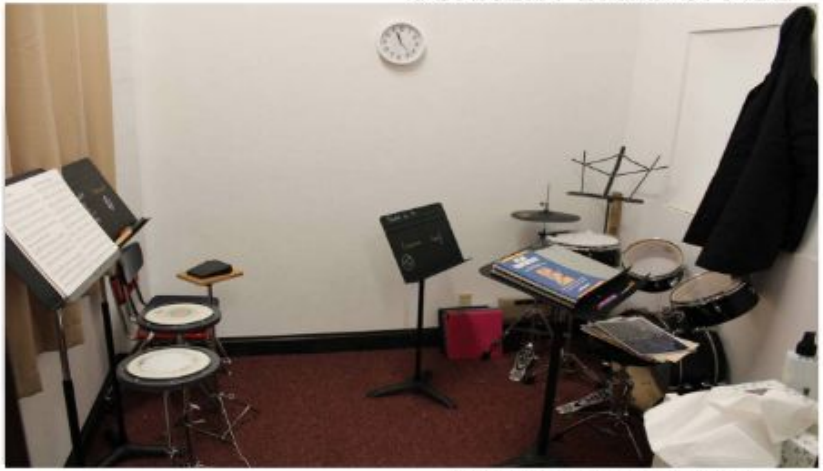
No privacy
Sound issues
Shared space due to lack of classrooms
Temporary partitioning to separate classes

NEW SMALL GROUP SPACE



Dedicated rooms for RTI and ADSIS services
One class per room
Privacy
Quiet
Purpose-built space

CURRENT BAND SPACE



Closet sized
Poor acoustics
Too small for full band practice
No room for instruments
Private lessons only

NEW BAND SPACE



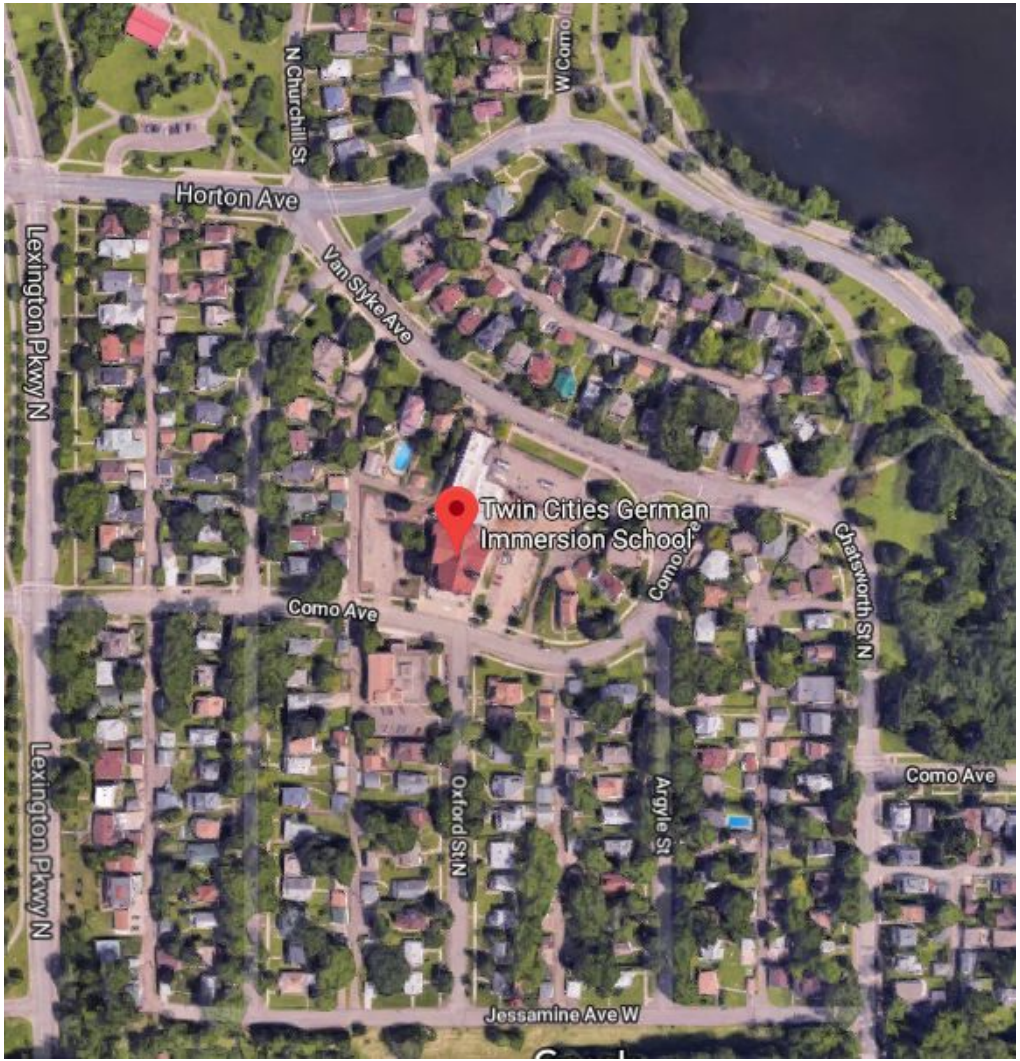
Large room
Good acoustics
Enough room for a band class
Space for instrument storage
Full band can play at once

Building Plans


The view from the SE corner of the school's property highlights the cafeteria windows and increased play area.


The South view from Oxford St establishes better pedestrian access, circulation, and increased safety for students


West view shows windows for the gymnasium and classrooms.



TWIN CITIES GERMAN IMMERSION SCHOOL

TCGIS is part of the Warrendale neighborhood in Como Park.



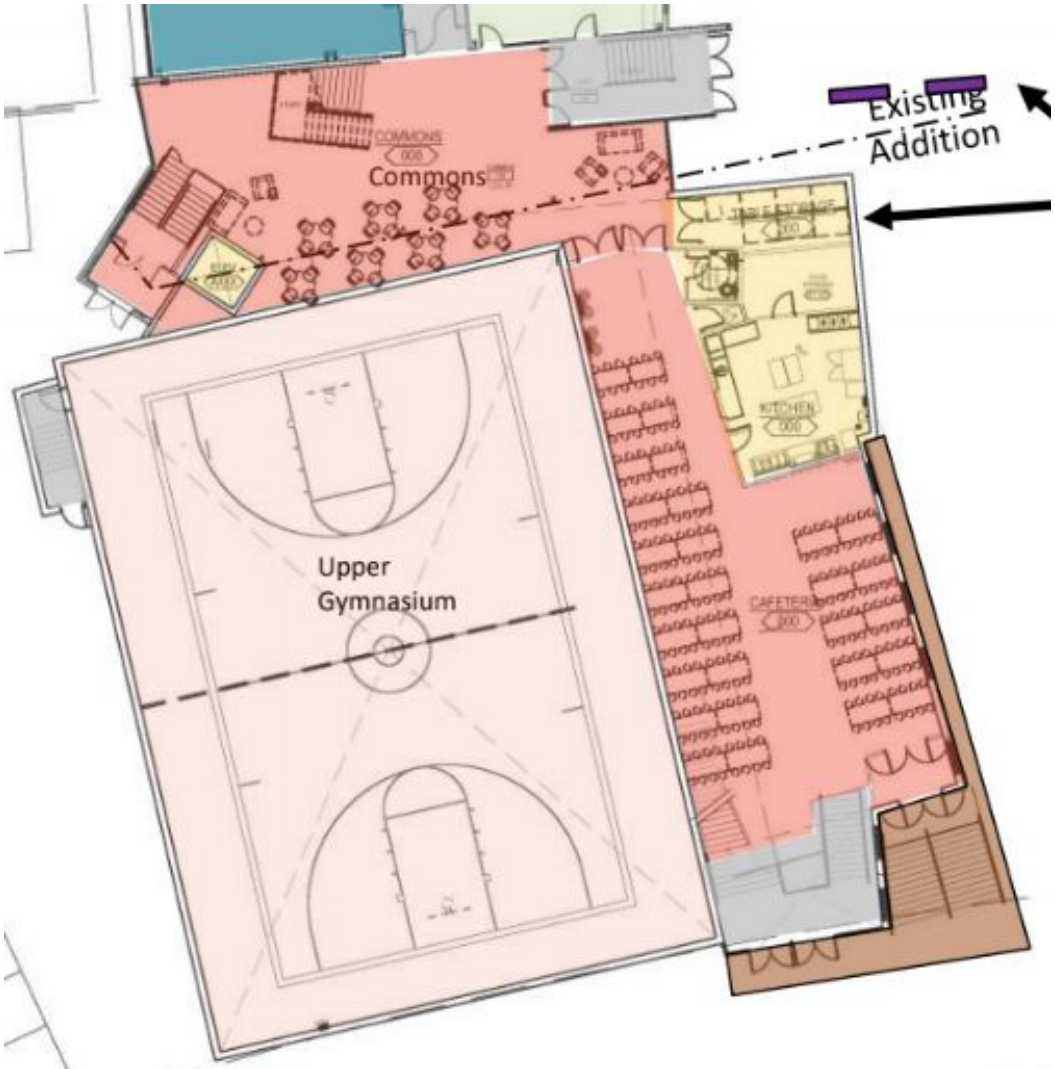
TWIN CITIES GERMAN IMMERSION SCHOOL

Current: 62,000sf, or 105sf per student at current enrollment of 587.

Without project, drop to 95sf per student using max enrollment of 648.

Project increases space to 113sf per student.

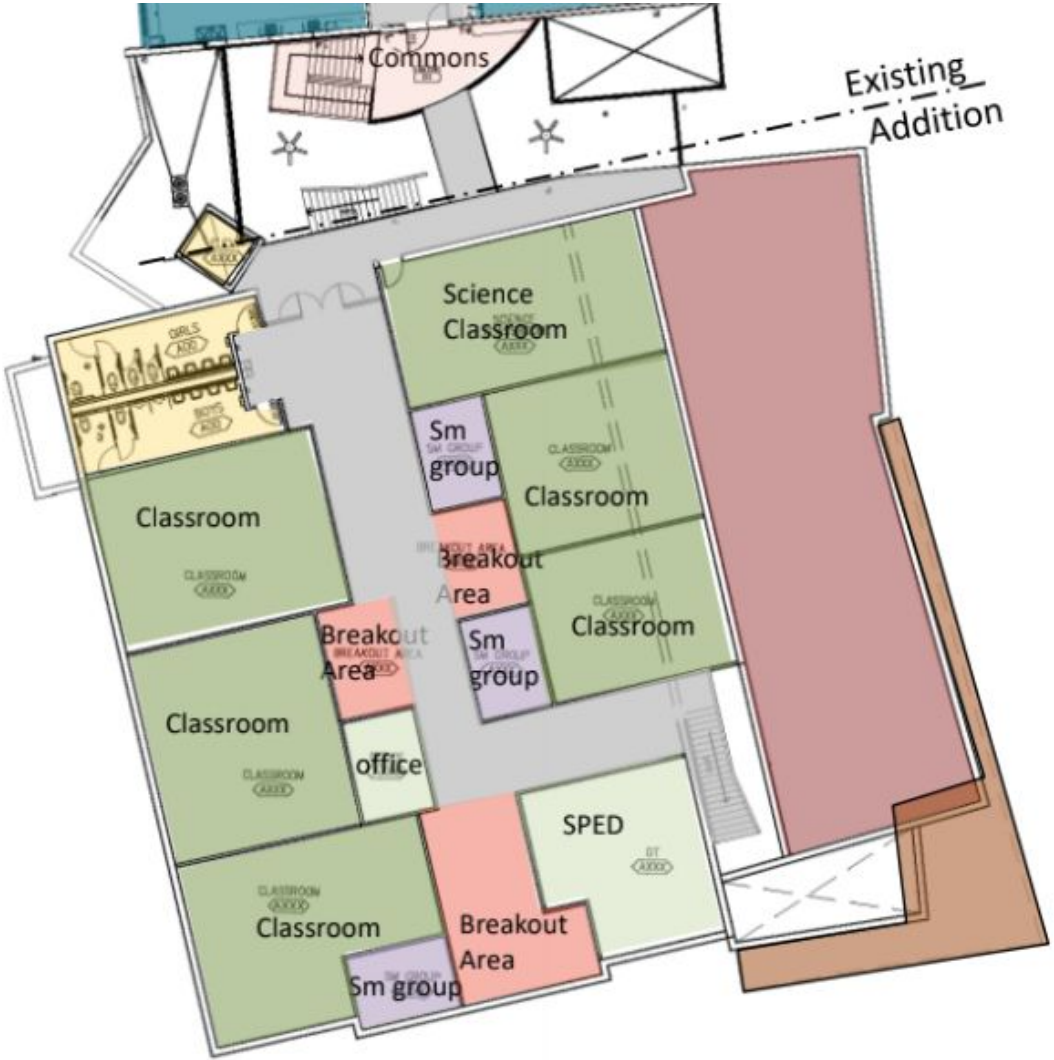
Average charter school = 100-120 sq ft per student.



TWIN CITIES GERMAN IMMERSION SCHOOL

- New cafeteria with large windows
- New kitchen prep area
- Larger commons
- Additional elevator improves accessibility

First Floor



TWIN CITIES GERMAN IMMERSION SCHOOL

- New classrooms, including new science room.
- Additional break out and office space for RTI.
- Additional much needed bathrooms.

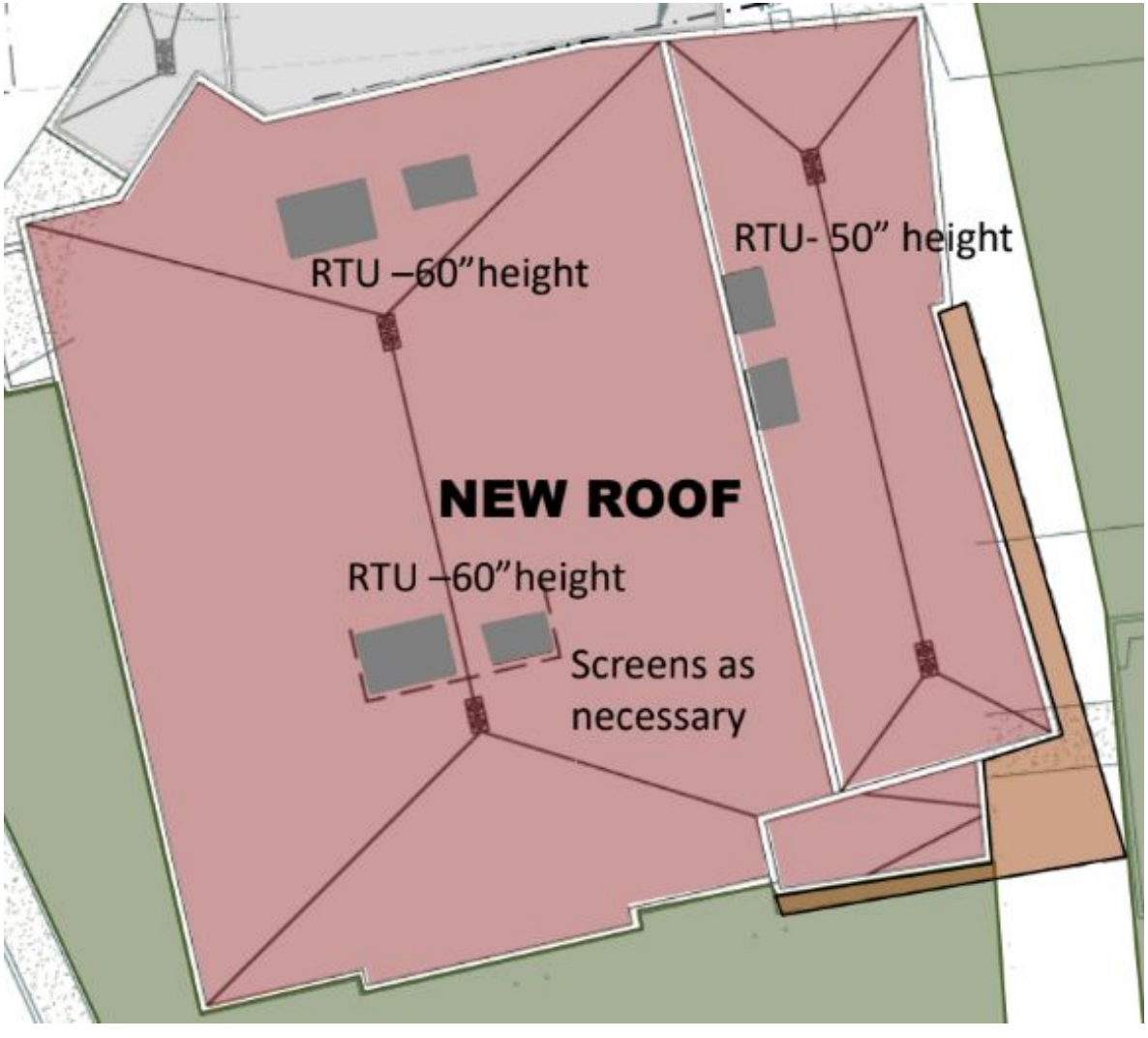
Second Floor



TWIN CITIES GERMAN IMMERSION SCHOOL

- New dividable regulation size gym
- Larger flex/band space
- Additional bathrooms
- Floor levels match to improve accessibility

Lower Floor



TWIN CITIES GERMAN IMMERSION SCHOOL

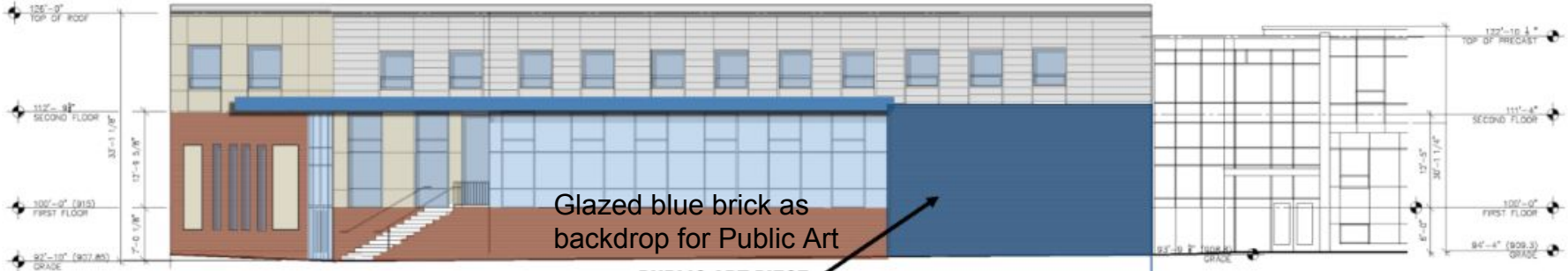
Roof Top Units (RTU’s) will have minimal or no view from the public right of way.



WEST ELEVATION



SOUTH ELEVATION



TWIN CITIES GERMAN IMMERSION SCHOOL

Members of the St. Paul Zoning Committee,
I ask you for your support of the TCGIS variances and site plan.

Appendix

How did we arrive at this site plan?

Brief History of process www.tcgisbuildingproject.org

- Oct 2015 task force created to solve space need
- Feb 2016 facility committee report identifying need
- Jan 2017 board retreat included space need
- Feb 2017 facility committee updated wants/needs
- April 2017 task force issued final report
- Sept 2017 review of construction options
- Oct 2017 D-10 notified of building plans
- Sept - Nov 2017 **investigate multiple property acquisitions**



Brief History www.tcgisbuildingproject.org

- March 2018 **neighborhood listening session**
- April 2018 historic recap of facility committee work
- May-Jul 2018 **reviewed Central Lutheran site, deemed not feasible**
- July 2018 Project Survey, como neighbors included
- August 2018 Design Survey, como neighbors included
- Sept 2018 **toured TIES building, not feasible**
- **Oct 2018 D-10 council update**



ALL monthly committee meetings, board meetings are open to public, board packets & youtube videos of board meetings are posted online . Many ways to learn about TCGIS.

Designs that *Continued* Adaptive Reuse of the former Church Structure

TCGIS Evaluated 5 New Reuse Designs between August 2017 and October 2018

- Option 1-Gym on the West parking lot
- Option 2-Gym on the East parking lot
- Option 3-Classrooms added to east end of classroom building
- Option 23. 1-Smaller gym on the West parking lot
- Option 23.2-Elevated Gym straddling the West parking lot

Option 1

Gym on the West parking lot



- Would require **major** variance for lot coverage
- Dramatically reduces playground space
- Retrofitting and maintaining historic structure unaffordable

Option 2

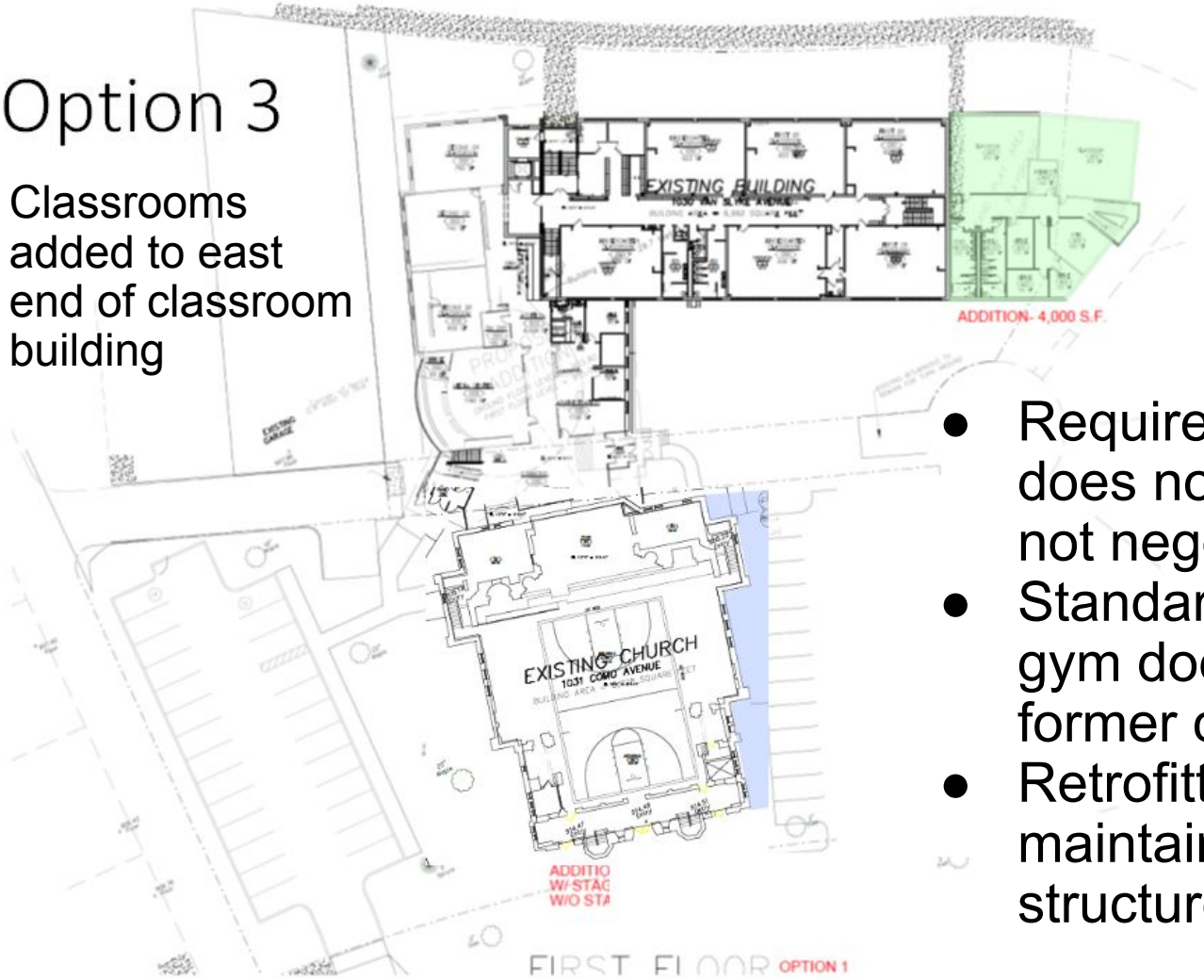
Gym on the East parking lot



- Would require **major** variance for lot coverage
- Dramatically reduces playground space
- Retrofitting and maintaining historic structure unaffordable

Option 3

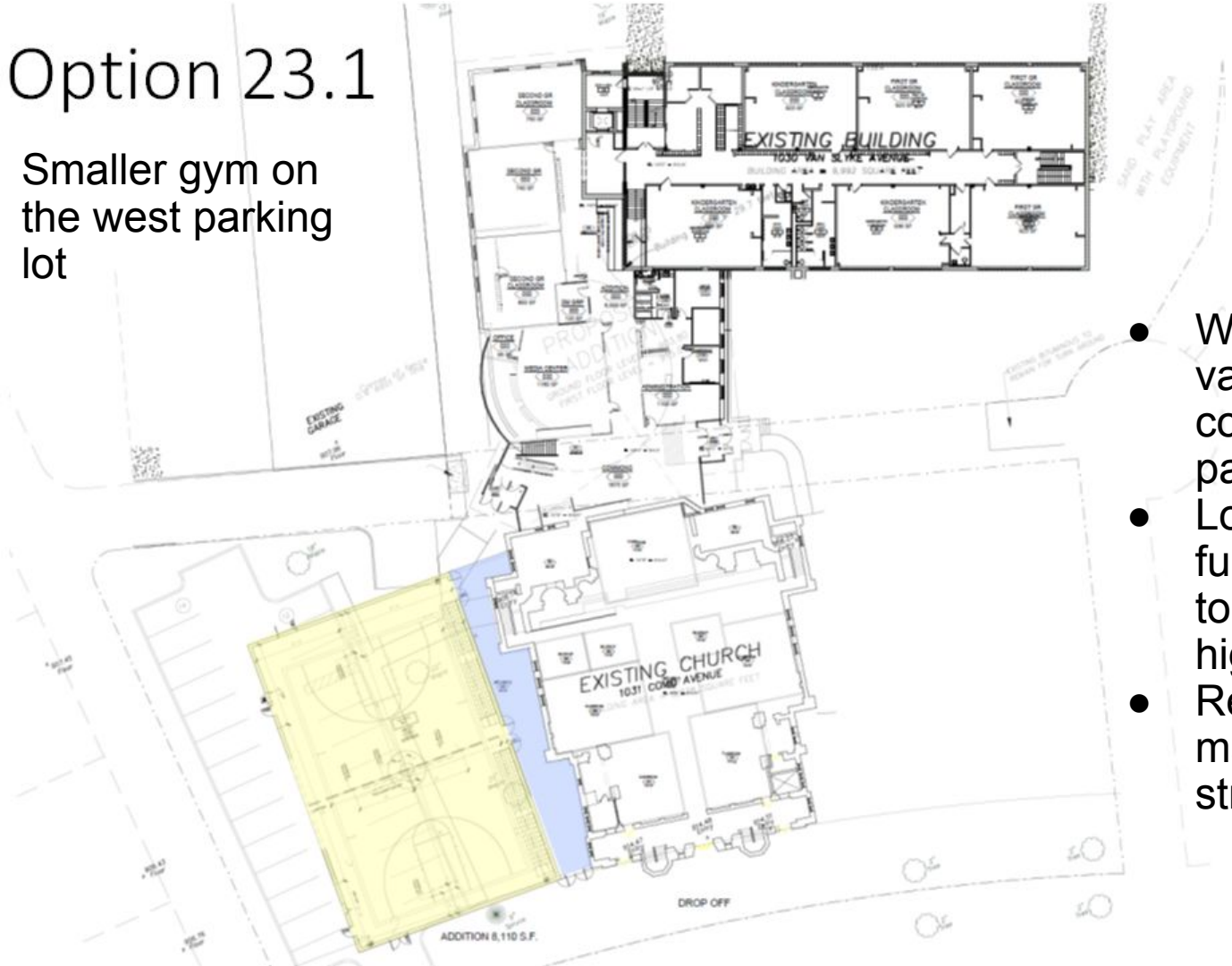
Classrooms added to east end of classroom building



- Requires property TCGIS does not own and could not negotiate to buy
- Standard sized dividable gym does not fit inside former church
- Retrofitting and maintaining historic structure unaffordable

Option 23.1

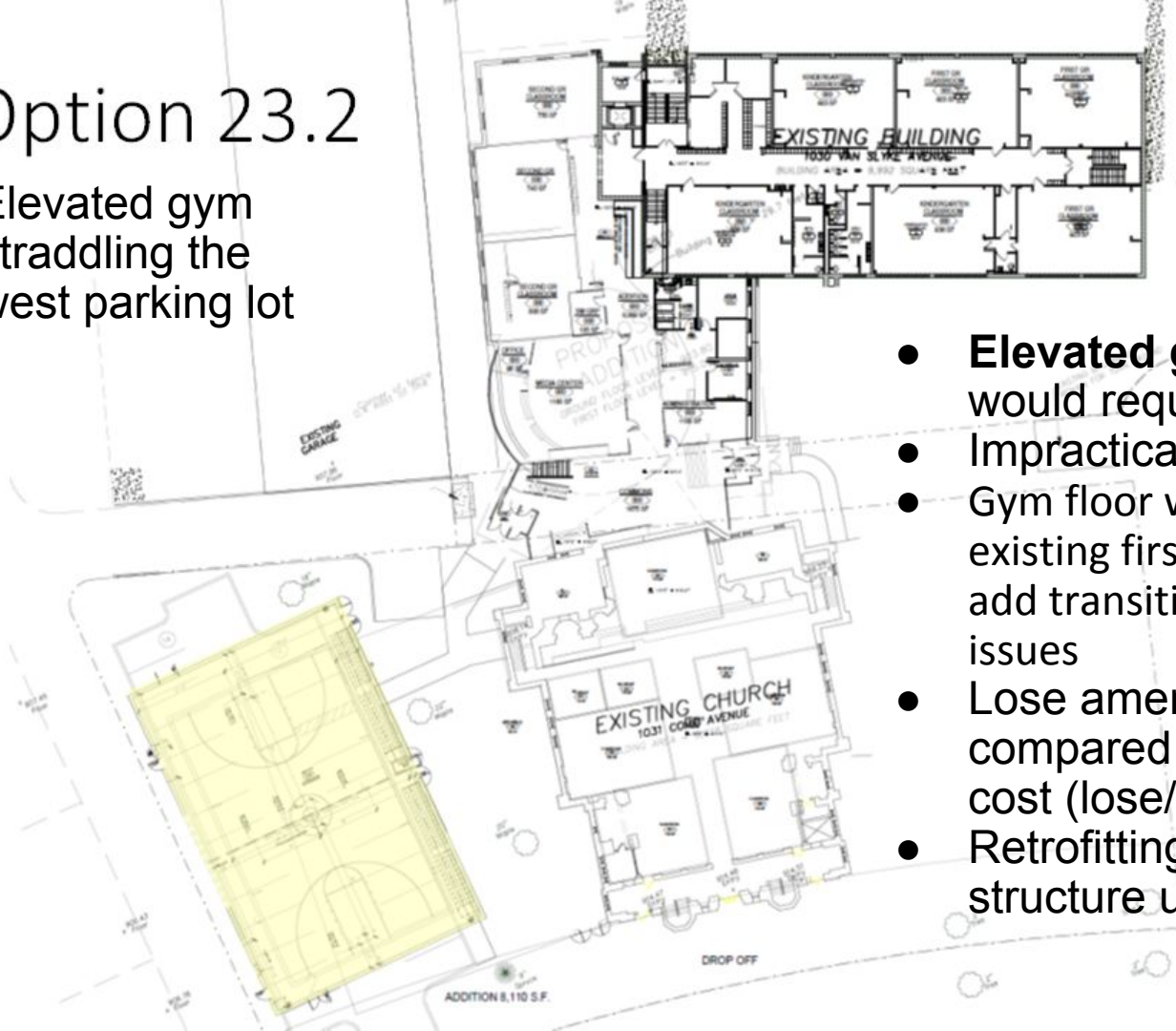
Smaller gym on the west parking lot



- Would require **major** variances for lot coverage and onsite parking
- Lose amenities and functionality compared to current plan with higher cost (lose/lose)
- Retrofitting and maintaining historic structure unaffordable

Option 23.2

Elevated gym straddling the west parking lot



- **Elevated gym** over west parking would require **major height** variance
- Impractical construction, expensive
- Gym floor would not be even with existing first or second levels and would add transitions creating accessibility issues
- Lose amenities and functionality compared to current plan with higher cost (lose/lose)
- Retrofitting and maintaining historic structure unaffordable

Evaluation of incorporating materials and design elements of former church into new building

Survey question: If Aula building materials are re-used in the new design, how would you like to see them incorporated into the new addition?

Cost estimates from our general contractor to save or reuse some Aula building materials:

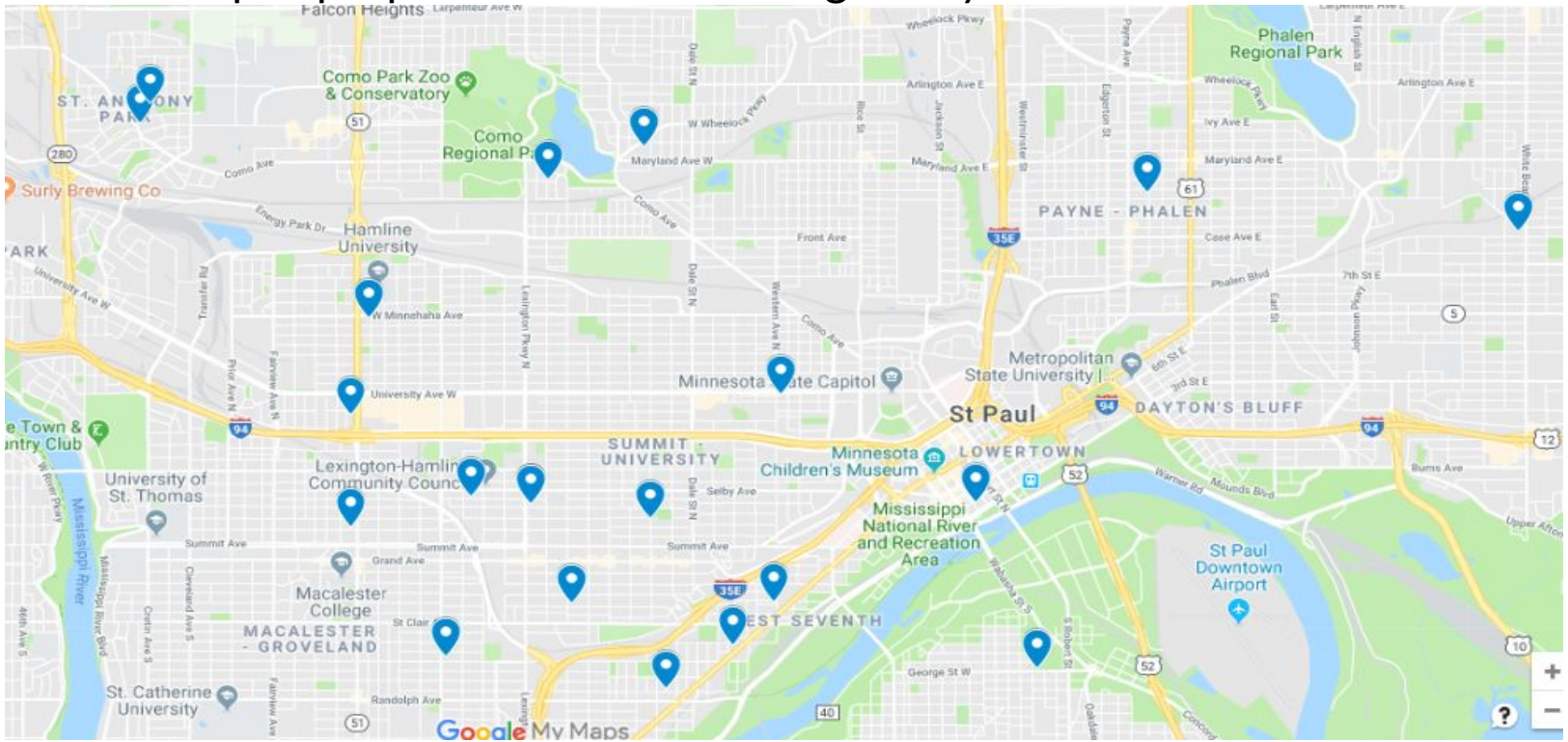
- Saving and reconstructing the rose window - $150,780.
- Saving stone work form doorway arches - $55,800.
- Saving roofing tile / brick – two pallets of each - $9,850.
- Saving tan corner stones - $49,650.
- Saving como ave facade - $525,000 - $600,000

Designation is a burden

- The projected maintenance on the AULA (former church sanctuary) alone is $1.5M: roof, boiler, water heater, windows, doors. None of this cost makes Aula better for education / program.
  - **Designation will create an untenable financial burden for TCGIS.**
  - TCGIS cannot meet the needs of its students and staff with a repurposed church sanctuary. (See section 6 preservation plan)
  - **Example of designation burden: historically accurate S-tile roof is nearly twice the price of a shingle roof**

Charles A Hausler: Not Unique

This is a map of properties in St. Paul designed by Charles A Hausler.

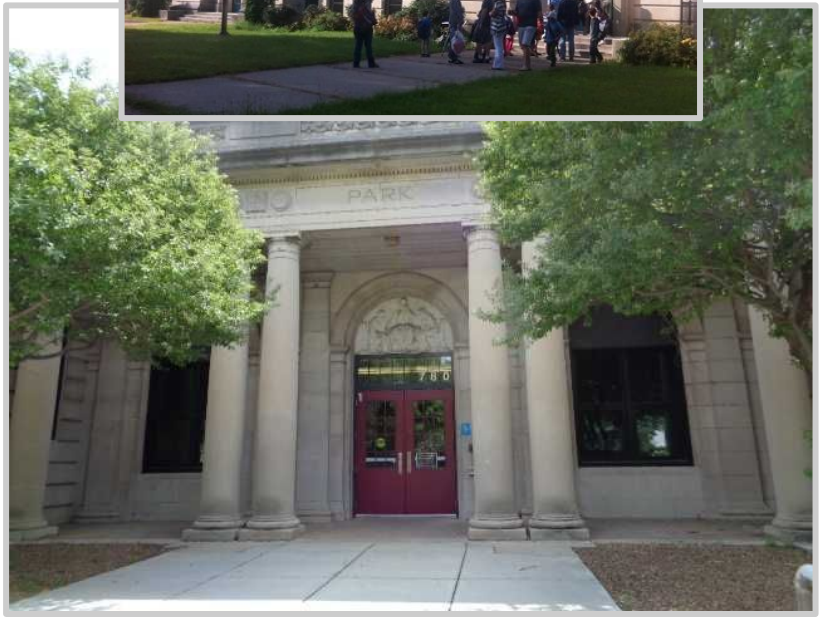


Locally Designated St. Paul Public Schools?

There are none; yet St. Paul Public Schools owns at least 3 Hausler designed properties, eligible for historic designation under HPC criterion #5 (notable architect): Randolph Heights, Como Elementary, and Wm Ames School (Upper campus of L' Etoile du Nord).



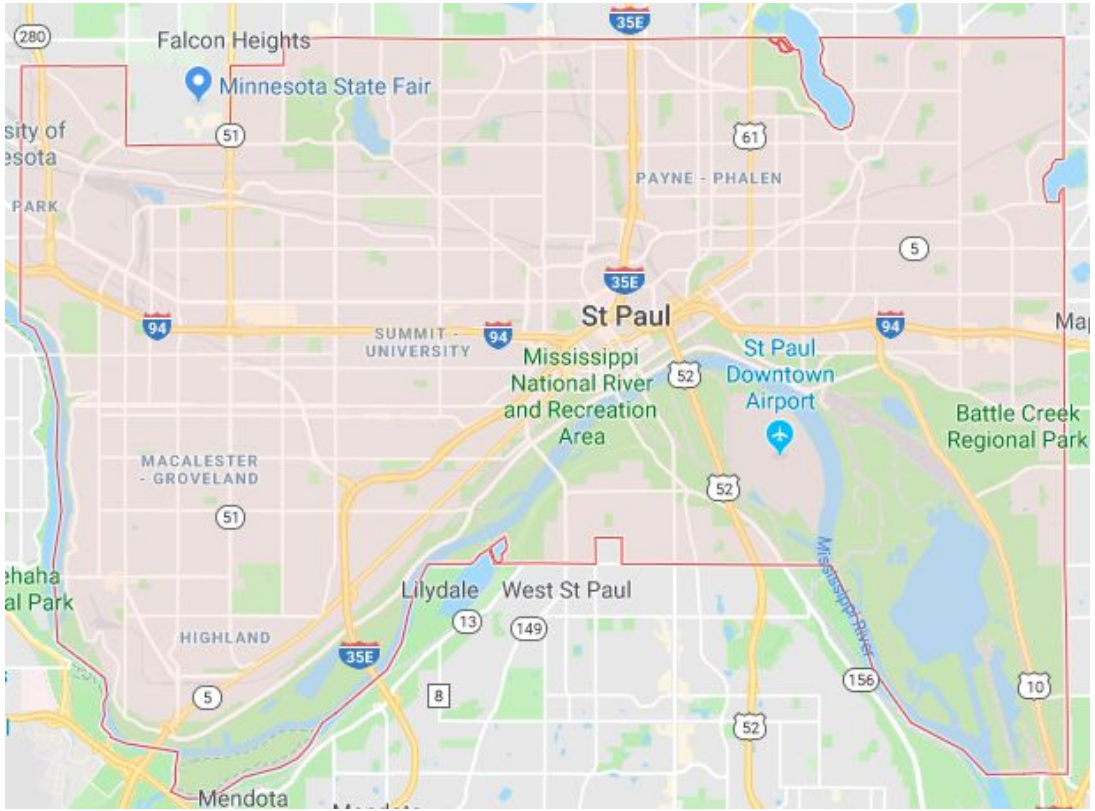




Designation Without Owner Consent

This is a map of known buildings that have received local designation without owner consent.

NONE?



Designation Without Consent: Dangerous Precedent!

- **Autonomy matters**. Public Schools have a fiduciary responsibility to their students and staff. Designation compromises this responsibility.
- **Designation has a real cost.** TCGIS has spent over $30K in legal and consultant fees since SHSA filed the TRO on October 2018.
- **It only takes one:** Allowing a neighborhood activist group to forcibly alter the legal status of an old church building will have huge ramifications for Planning and Economic Development in St. Paul.
- **Too little, too late:** TCGIS never would have purchased the property if it were locally designated. No reasonable property owner would allow a substantial change of use after 4 years of ownership.

Variance 1 - Height: 3’ 1” Variance



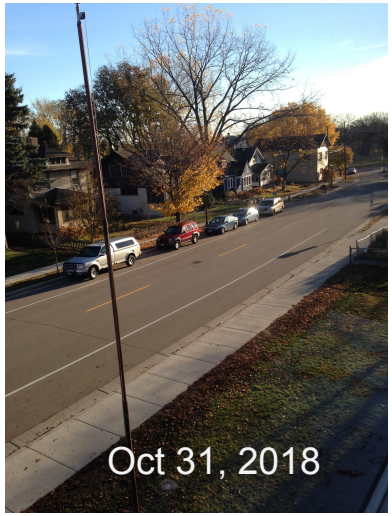


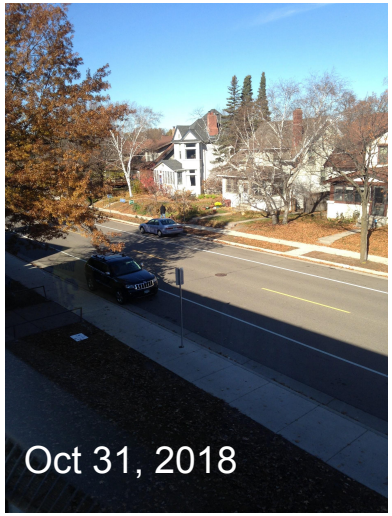
Traffic Study Supports Full Parking Variance

- Drop off and pick up operations are “slightly shorter in duration than expected for an elementary school,” 25 mins/15 mins respectively.
- In study area, 8 of 9 intersections operate within acceptable ranges for wait times. Lexington/Como is recommended for a change to signal timing. - A signal timing change was made on 11/28.

Morning and Mid-**school day** parking showing **copious** amounts of available parking









Great River: 100 FTE, 71 off street parking spaces (29 parking space difference)

Saint Anthony Park: 50 FTE, **only 4 off street parking spaces.**

*SAP was granted a variance for their latest project. Didn't have to add parking, only have 4 spots for their 50 staff. Only had to account for staff adding with project.

Support for TCGIS

- HPC Hearing:
  - 195 HPC letters supporting TCGIS versus 6 favoring designation
  - 22 HPC testimonies supporting TCGIS versus 16 favoring designation
- 57% of D10 Land Use Committee supported TCGIS variances.
- Comprehensive Neighborhood Planning Committee voted 5-0 against designation
- Planning Commission voted 12-1 against designation
- 80 letters of support sent to zoning committee; only 12 against