

**MAJOR SITE PLAN REVIEW MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** April 27, 2011 – Updated May 16, 2011

**TO:** ABSECON CITY PLANNING BOARD

**FROM:** ROBERT L. REID, AICP, P.P., Board Planner

**SUBJECT:** Preliminary Site Plan Review #5 (Addendum)  
Absecon Gardens  
(Formerly Absecon Seniors, LLC, The Pinnacle Club at Absecon)  
BLOCK 161, LOT 1  
Project No. ABS 0015.02

**This is an update of my Review Memo of April 27, 2011.** This was a supplement to my testimony offered at last that public hearing relating to Absecon School Statistics. This is an addendum to prior review memorandums provided. Comments in prior memorandums remain unchanged.

**Documents Received from the Board of Education 01/28/11:**

Item No./ Sheet No.	Description	Date
	Copy of e-mail questions with marked-up answers by Tina Davisson	01/26/11
	Functional Capacity Table	11/28/05

**Documents Received from the Board of Education 04/26/11:**

Item No./ Sheet No.	Description	Date
	School Staff List	No Date
	School Complex Floor Plan	No Date
	Absecon School Enrollment Report	03/31/11
	High School Students and Costs	01/25/11
	Projected Students 2011/2012.	No Date
	Number of Students in Oyster Bay, Calf Apts, Marin Drive	No Date

I met with Tina Davisson, Business Administrator and James Giaquinto, Superintendant on 1/28/11 and 4/26/11. At each meeting they provided information referenced above and they stated that enrollment has increased slightly is that it is projected to continue to increase. They project that the Marsh/Attales School enrollment will increase by 21 students, and High School enrollment will increase by 23 students without additional students from Absecon Gardens. I stated that it was my opinion that Absecon Gardens could have the potential to increase Marsh/Attales School enrollment by 27 students and high school enrollment by 9 as a worse case. I explained that this was based on my review of local statistics not the statewide statistics used by the applicant's consultant. Since the comparison is based on existing multi-family rental units not for sale units, my numbers are higher. Mr. Giaquinto stated that the school could handle 27 additional students if they were evenly distributed through-out the grade levels. The concern is that in the event that a large number were to be generated in one or two grades rather than being evenly distributed that could cause the need to hire another teacher. Mr. Giaquinto stated that the maximum school complex capacity is an additional 40 students. He was also concerned about the projected high school enrollment without Absecon Gardens. They stated that maximum recommended class size is 25 students. However they would prefer to maintain class sizes at 20 students or less.

There has been a slight increase in school enrollment in the recent years. In 2009 the number of students attending E. C. Attales Middle School and H. Marsh Elementary School was only at 833. Earlier this year the enrollment was at 845. As of yesterday Absecon Schools enrollment is at 847.

The Functional Capacity chart dated 11/28/2005 provided stated that the functional capacity of the school complex was at 986 students. According to the Functional Capacity Table there is additional student capacity is 139 students. This is inconsistent with Mr. Giaquinto's statement that an additional 40 is the maximum capacity. Also, the quote of 43 classrooms is inconsistent with my inventory of the rooms in the school complex.

At the public meeting on April 26, 2011 a member of the public and the applicant's consultant quoted conflicting numbers relating to classrooms, projected students, etc. There were inconsistent perceptions of how the classrooms are used by all in the meeting. My numbers I do not agree with the member of the public, the applicant's consultant or the Board of Education.

To help determine the actual impact on Absecon Schools with Absecon Gardens requesting a conversion from age-restricted to no-age restricted, an inventory of school complex was performed to help evaluate the impact. There is an approximate total of 205 rooms in the school complex which includes, two (2) libraries, two (2) gymnasiums, two (2) art rooms, two (2) music rooms, sixty-two (62) classrooms, a cafetorium, numerous offices, numerous storage rooms, numerous restrooms, etc. *See attached Room Inventory and Floor plan dated 4/26/11.*

According to the documents provided and Absecon Board of Education website Absecon Schools employs 103 people not including the maintenance and cafeteria staff. The staff consists of approximately 19 administrative staff, 2 guidance counselors, 71 teachers, 1 nurse, and 10 Teachers Aides. *See detailed list below that presumes room use based on employee classification: **Students per Grade have been added to the table below.***

Marsh School Staff		Presumed Classrooms Use	Students Per Grade(1)	Other and Shared Rooms
Principal	1		0	Offices
Secretaries	2		0	
Guidance	1		0	
Pre-school (incl. 1 Aide)	2	1	15	
Kindergarten	5	5	92	
1 <sup>st</sup> Grade	5	5	112	
2nd Grade	4	4	85	
3rd Grade	5	5	92	
4th Grade	4	4	88	
Basic skills	3	3	0	
Resource Room	2	2	0	
Special Education	2	2	0	
Aides	4			
Sub-Totals	40	31		

Attales School Staff		Presumed Classrooms Use	Student Per Grade(1)	Other and Shared Rooms
Principal	1		0	Offices
Secretaries	2		0	
Guidance	1		0	
5th Grade	4	4	97	
6th Grade	4	4	96	
7th Grade	5	5	81	
8th Grade	4	4	89	
Special Education	2	1	0	
Resource Room	4	1	0	
Sub-Totals	27	19		

Totals 847(1)

(1) Number of students per grade taken from Absecon School Enrollment Report, dated 03/31/11

<u>Shared Staff</u>		<u>Presumed Classrooms Use</u>	<u>Other and Shared Rooms</u>
Gifted/Talented	2	1	
Art	2		Art Rooms
Computers	1		Computer Rooms
English as Second Lang.	2	2	
World Language	1	1	
Media Specialist	1		Distance Learning Room?
Vocal Music	1		Music Rooms
Instrumental Music	1		Music Rooms
Nurse	1		Office
Physical Education	3		Gym /office
Speech	1	1	
Technology	1	1	
Aides	5		
Sub-Totals	22	6	

Board of Education Staff

Superintendent	1		Offices
Business Administrator	1		
Support Staff	12		
Grand Totals	103*(2)	56	

\*Staff list taken from School List provided on 4/26/11.

\*Does not include maintenance staff, librarians not listed and the cafeteria staff.  
Actual employee subject to confirmation by BOE staff.

**(2) Mr. Giaquinto in his testimony on 5/10/11 stated that there are approximately 116 school staff.**

The above list of staff and presumed classroom use leaves questions about how the sixty-two (62) classrooms are actually used by the seven-one (71) teachers and ten (10) teacher's aides. Is there a potential to increase the capacity of the school complex if needed? The presumed classroom use is based on the above, generates a need for fifty-six (56) classrooms plus the one used for the PAL after school program.

The use of all sixty-two (62) classrooms while all the other common shared rooms in the building are not occupied by students greatly increases the physical capacity of the school complex. (See *Room Inventory attached*)

At the 1/28/11 meeting I suggested Mr. Giaquinto attend the Planning Board meeting to provide information to the Planning Board. It is suggested that the Planning Board formally invite Mr. Giaquinto to attend the next Planning Board meeting to confirm the actual number of employees and explain how the sixty-two (62) classrooms are actually used. Mr. Giaquinto should explain why his maximum capacity opinion differs from the Functional Capacity Table provided. Also Mr. Giaquinto can explain the actual impact if there were to be the need to create one or more additional classes in particular grade levels. Would additional staff need to be hired or could current staff be reassigned?

**Mr. Giaquinto did offer testimony at the May 10, 2011 public hearing to help clarify, to an extent, the available capacity of the School Complex. Mr. Giaquinto stated that the School Complex could handle the estimated 27 to 40 students provided the students were evenly distributed though-out K through 8. He stressed that if there was a spike in one or two grades that there may be a need to hire a new teacher. He also stated there was only one empty classroom. Mr. Giaquinto stated that the actual classroom sizes vary from about 7 students to about 22 per classroom. The actual number of classrooms was not mentioned during the testimony. The actual use of each of the existing sixty-two (62) classrooms was not discussed during testimony.**

**A request was made on May 12, 2011 for the Administration to allocate students to each of the sixty-two (62) classrooms. I was asked not to use an average of 13.7 students per classroom ( 847 students/ 62 classrooms ) because it does not accurately depict the actual class sizes. I prefer not to use an average for that same reason. I have asked the School Administration for an estimated allocation for each of the sixty-two (62) classrooms because it will be more accurate than my presumptions made above. The School Administration suggested I conduct my own analysis. Refer to Table above which includes the presumed classroom use.**

The Planning Board needs such further clarification to help determine if there is a substantial detriment to our school system caused by the conversion request.

**The Planning Board determined that there was not a substantial detriment to the community with the conversion request.**

CC: Andrew Previti, P.E., Board Engineer  
Michael Fitzgerald, Esq., Board Attorney  
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Richard DeLucry, Esq.  
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