TOWN OF LOS GATOS
PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT
Meeting Date: September 12, 2012

ITEM NO: 3
DESK ITEM

PREPARED BY: Marni F. Moseley, Associate Planner
mmoseley@losgatosca.gov

APPLICATION NO.: Conditional Use Permit Application U-12-013

LOCATION: **50 University Avenue, Suite 300** (upstairs portion of former Borders Books)

APPLICANT: Shlemmer Algaze Associates

PROPERTY OWNER: Street Retail Inc., LLC.

CONTACT PERSON: Danna Sigal

APPLICATION SUMMARY: Requesting approval of a Conditional Use Permit to operate a private school in an upper floor tenant space on property zoned C-2:LHP:PD. APN 529-02-044.

EXHIBITS: 1-4.Previously Received
5. Letters of support received September 12, 2012 (two pages)

REMARKS:

Two letters of support were received after distribution of the staff report (Exhibit 5).

Prepared by:
Marni F. Moseley, AICP
Associate Planner

Approved by:
Todd Capurso
Acting Director of Community Development

TC:MM:cgt

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Kris and Treva Johnsgard (and Colton!)
13560 Indian Rock Way
Los Gatos, CA
)5033

RECEIVED

SEP 12 2012

TOWN OF LOS GATOS
PLANNING DIVISION

September 7, 2012

Danielle LePon Ryckman, Ed.M.
Head of School
Fusion Academy, Los Gatos
20 S Santa Cruz Ave,
Suite 111
Los Gatos, CA 95030

Dear Danielle,

My Wife Treva and I are writing this letter in support of the immense need for your Fusion Academy in the town of Los Gatos. Over the three years of Middle School at RHMS (6th, 7th, and 8th grades), our son Colton, Treva and I more than struggled to help Colton achieve passing grades. Ultimately, we pulled Colton out of 8th grade 3 weeks before year end. During those 3 years, we worked with the teachers, counselors, psychiatrists, pediatricians, etc. to try and figure out why Colton could not be successful in the public school setting. Colton's State STAR testing results were always way above average in all subjects but we could not come up with a method to get Colton to achieve passing grades. Although Colton's grades were very poor, he was pushed to the next grade each year due to his consistently exceptional STAR :sting results.

Coming into this freshman year we were literally at a loss as to what to do with Colton scholastically. We felt that putting him into LGHS would be like throwing him into a Lion's Den... We knew that LGHS was not an option for us as the metrics of success there are no different than RHMS. We considered a private school setting but we didn't think that Colton's special needs would be met there either.

When the Fusion Academy was suggested and described to us by a psychologist, the teaching methods sounded like a great fit for Colton... one on one teaching for each subject. We believe this fit Colton's needs perfectly as he is a brilliant young man but has trouble staying on point in the typical classroom environment. We think that the focused time with each teacher during each subject will allow Colton's great mind to absorb information like we know it will. Our hope is that Colton's immersion into Fusion's learning style will help him to "learn how to be a good student" by continuous, intense example and guidance. Ultimately, our goal will be to transition him back to LGHS when he tells us that he thinks he can do it. Fusion offers a nice transition program for that as well... anywhere from slowly adding classes at LGHS one at a time all the way to going to LGHS full time but completing LGHS homework at Fusion after school.

Another very valuable feature, Fusion does not send homework home with the kids. This is huge for our home life and family dynamics as dealing with homework the last three years have been extremely difficult on all three of us.

Sincerely,

Kris and Treva Johnsgard

EXHIBIT 5

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SEP 12 2012

TOWN OF LOS GATOS
PLANNING DIVISION

September 10, 2012

Tiffany Broyles Boltz
148 New York Ave.
Los Gatos, CA 95030

To: Los Gatos Town Council

I am writing to express my gratitude to Fusion Academy for providing an invaluable and truly unique education option, and I am also writing to thank the Town of Los Gatos for welcoming this new school to our town.

I have lived in Los Gatos for 20 years and have been involved on every level in our local public schools, from chairing fundraisers to serving as Fisher Middle School's Home and School Club President for two years. When it became clear to me that my daughter, after having spent her entire K-11 education in these schools, had evolving and new academic needs, I did a great deal of research into alternative education options. I was comforted and thrilled to find just the right option for my child in Fusion Academy, right here in my community.

Fusion provides a supportive, nurturing, therapeutic environment, with very little distraction, where a student cannot fall through the cracks. They also provide a chance for a fresh start for many kids who may need just that. A school of this nature that caters to students who have had unsuccessful experiences in other school settings truly fills a void and serves a need for many families. Based on the speed with which Fusion was able to fill all of their available enrollment spots, clearly our community can support this alternative to our existing private and public schools.

My daughter started at Fusion over the summer where she excelled in a class she had failed twice at Los Gatos High School. She is off to a great start this year, feeling success in her classes and more confidence in her abilities as a student, and with the possibility of attending college next year an actual reality for her now.

I know that Fusion is bursting at the seams in their current space and their need for a larger space is an obvious one. Please continue to extend your support to this school and allow them the opportunity to move into a larger space in which to educate students who have unique and highly individualized needs.

Thank you for your consideration.

Tiffany Broyles Boltz

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