

August 30, 2005

Mayor Robert Good
Council Members Javandel, Lieber, Maris, and Okawachi
Albany City Hall
1000 San Pablo Avenue
Albany, CA 94706

Dear Mayor Good and City Council Members:

As directed by the City Council on August 8, 2005, Saint Mary's had a facilitated meeting with representatives of the Peralta Park Neighborhood Association (PPNA). Saint Mary's hired MIG of Berkeley to help with this process. At MIG's request, the first meeting was a listening session with PPNA to allow MIG staff an opportunity to hear PPNA's concerns (without Saint Mary's present) regarding the conditional use permit and to identify strategies for resolving the issue. The listening session ended with PPNA requesting specific actions from Saint Mary's. PPNA's request was outlined in the meeting summary and I prepared a response dated August 23. MIG used both documents to develop an agenda for the facilitated discussion which was held on August 26, 2005.

As you can see from the summary, Saint Mary's and PPNA have two very different approaches to resolving this issue. Our approach is designed to be responsive to a comment made by Councilman Farid Javandel, which was to "solve the problem as a community". We value having facilitated discussions with the neighborhood. However, we know they can be much more productive if the participants are representative of all campus neighbors and if we are allowed to discuss and solve problems within a broader context. Saint Mary's commitment to this process is such that we believe that a City Council imposed requirement to engage in such a process would be an appropriate additional condition of approval to the existing conditional use permit. We believe that such an additional condition will enhance understanding by all – Saint Mary's and the Community – and will be a better forum than the Council or the Planning Commission for discussing and implementing changes in the way the school functions in the immediate future and the long term.

Saint Mary's is eager to engage the larger community in a meaningful and more comprehensive dialogue about the school, its role and related impacts in the neighborhood. With professional assistance from MIG, the school hopes to host regular meetings starting in September to discuss current issues, the proposed master plan, and activities related to the day-to-day operations such as parking and traffic. MIG will also conduct a survey to collect data about neighborhood concerns and their related priorities. The survey results will help to identify priority topics for meeting agendas and action planning. Saint Mary's will also introduce the proposed master plan to the neighborhood and create opportunities for community involvement. Through this process, we hope some neighbors will be interested in serving on a

neighborhood advisory council. The council would provide feedback on the master plan and school related issues. They would also help develop the agendas for the community meetings. Our goal is to develop and sustain a communication process that will serve both the neighborhood and the school throughout the master plan process and over the long term.

Sincerely,

Brother Edmond Larouche, FSC
President

cc: Rich Brown, Chair
Peralta Park Neighborhood Association

Encl.: MIG Summary of August 22, 2005 Listening Session with PPNA
Response to Summary, dated August 23, 2005
MIG Summary of August 26, 2005 Facilitated Discussion