

## **SITE ASSESSMENT**

### **Walker Elementary School**

#### **GENERAL SITE DESCRIPTION**

This site is located at 4 Church Street in a residential neighborhood along major local collector streets, North State Street, Bouton Street, and North Main Street, in the City of Concord. The original structure was constructed in the early 1900's and has had multiple improvements since that time, as recently as 1988. The school facility is situated on an approximate 4.7-acre parcel. There is the primary well-defined bus drop-off/pick-up loop located off Church Street to provide access to the main entrance. There is a staff parking area and access drive adjacent to this loop road and parallel with Church Street. Reportedly, a portion of the parking area for staff parking is also used for parent drop-off and pick-up.

The building is a two-story facility with a basement level that is also used. The front entrances are located on the Church Street side of the building. There are several secondary entrances around the building. The building does not comply with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) at the main entrances and other building entrances. There is a sidewalk along the most of the building perimeter and sidewalks do exist along North State Street, Church Street, and U S Rte. 3 (Bouton Street). There is playground equipment on the southeasterly side of the building, however, most other play areas are paved.

#### **EXISTING CONDITIONS**

##### **SITE UTILITIES**

**Water:** The site is serviced by municipal water. Reportedly, there are no known issues with the water system.

**Sewer:** The site is serviced by the municipal wastewater system. Reportedly, there are no known issues with the wastewater system.

**Drainage:** The site is collected into the municipally-owned and maintained storm water collection system by various methods. These include sheet flow across the site, being collected via on-site catch basins discharging to the City drainage system, or left for infiltration into existing soil (i.e. sections at the rear of the facility and in the play space area). The staff parking area located on the Church Street side, as well as the northern area of the facility drains into catch basins. Based upon observation of drainage ponded in several areas of the site, including the access drive along Church Street, also have ponded surface water. The play space areas of the building did not appear to have any significant surface water ponding issues, nor was this issue raised by CSD staff.. It is noted that no observations were made to determine the condition of any subsurface

drainage system components. Capacity analyses for closed drainage systems were not performed, however, based upon owner provided information, there does not appear to be capacity issues for the existing drainage collection systems. There does appear to be areas on this site which do not drain adequately as a result of inadequate placement or quantity of catch basins and use of the site for snow storage.

Electric/Telecommunications/CATV: These utilities are supplied to the site via underground conduits. Reportedly, most of these components are in adequate condition.

Fuel storage: The site has an underground storage tank used for heating fuel storage. Reportedly, no issues are known according to NHDES standards.

#### ACCESS DRIVES, PARKING AREAS AND TRAFFIC

As noted above, the primary access road is a loop driveway entering the site from Church Street to the main entrances as a bus drop-off/pick-up area, as well as parent drop-off/pick-up area. The access to the northern side of the building consists of a driveway off North State Street to a staff parking area and paved play area adjacent to the a grassed area of the site. This area was observed as being used as snow storage during our site visit. Reportedly, there is inadequate and inefficient parking available at this site, however, traffic circulation patterns are adequate with only minor problems.

The condition of the bituminous concrete pavement for the access loop road and parking areas is in poor to fair condition. Some locations of the parking areas and driveway require rehabilitation, particularly with regard to grades as surface water is ponded in the grassed areas as well as in the loop access road. The ten-year maintenance program has identified pavement improvements as a critical item.

#### SIDEWALKS AND WALKWAYS

As noted above, there are asphalt sidewalks leading to the facility from North State Street, US Route 3 (Bouton Street), and Church Street. A walkway exists along the easterly side of the facility next to the building as well. The pedestrian corridor from the school to residential neighborhoods in proximity to the school is heavily used and is located in heavily traveled and congested traffic corridors. The questionnaire provided by the consultant team and completed by CSD staff notes the concern of traffic in the neighborhood. The sidewalk adjacent to the building appears to be in fair overall condition.

#### PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT

The existing playground equipment is BIG TOYS equipment installed in 1988. A report detailing the playground equipment condition was performed during May, 2003 through the school's insurance provider, Primex<sup>3</sup>. This report outlines many recommendations to improve the safety conditions at the playgrounds. Due to the seasonal conditions during our site visit, verification of the safety improvement modifications was not conducted. Reportedly, the primary safety hazards identified in that May, 2003 report had been addressed. Outdoor play spaces are important as the site facility does not have a gym.

## MISCELLANEOUS SITE ISSUES

**Bike Racks:** There are bike racks available for this building near the Church Street entrances.

**Site Fencing:** There is site chain link fencing along the North State Street and US Route 3 (Bouton Street) boundaries by surrounding the playground space and almost the entire site. The fence has some locations requiring maintenance (i.e. new rail, fabric replacement, etc.).

**Solid Waste:** The dumpster is located on the northerly end of the site near the staff parking area. The dumpster is not set on a pad. The dumpster also does not have an enclosure.

**Floodplain:** The site is not located within a flood plain zone.

**Snow Removal:** At this site, snow removal is contracted separately. There is limited snow storage available at this site and snow piles were observed during our site visit.

## EXPANSION AND REHABILITATION OF THE SITE

There does not appear to be much land available for expansion capability for additional building additions on this site. The play areas seem to be adequate for the current type of student population, however, any additional building would decrease the already minimal space available for parking and play areas. This is particularly important given the fact that this facility has no gym space and outdoor play space is therefore very important. There is a need for additional parking space.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The drainage issues with regard to ponding should be addressed. Strategic placement of new drainage system components would provide improved site drainage conditions and reduce the ponding that was observed throughout the site.
2. It is recommended that the access loop drive and the rear parking area on this site be rehabilitated due to noted pavement deterioration.
3. Although a majority of the primary safety items have already been addressed, all of the playground equipment issues, as outlined in the Primex<sup>3</sup> report, should be addressed to provide safe equipment for the children.
4. The dumpster location should be addressed. A permanent dumpster location with an adequate pad and enclosure should be provided. The current location is not an ideal location because there is not a pad or adequate protection.