



THE FAIRFAX COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD

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Fairfax County
Public Schools

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August 8, 2014

Mr. John Thillmann
Seven Corners Land Use
And Transportation Task Force
Mason District Government Center
6507 Columbia Pike
Annandale, VA 22003

Dear Co-Chairman Thillmann, Co-Chair Ward and Members of the Seven Corners Visioning Task Force,

Thank you for your service on this important committee. I know this has taken a great deal of time, care and consideration to develop a recommendation on redevelopment of the Seven Corners area. I commend you on the work you have done and on the vision you are finalizing. There are many exciting facets to this plan.

I wanted to take this opportunity to comment, both as the School Board member representing Mason District and as a neighbor who lives in this area.

As you work on your final recommendations, I urge you to include in your vision your plan for how our area would handle the influx of new students that would result from any higher-density development you recommend. A critical piece in any redevelopment is making sure that necessary infrastructure is in place. This includes not only roads but schools, as well.

As you may know, our CIP funding does not meet current capacity needs. Additionally, the capacity for this area cannot accommodate the projected student impact from the plans currently under consideration. It is essential that any new plans for development include land and funding for adding school facilities accommodating each plan's student impact. I have attached FCPS's impact statement relative each proposal for your consideration.

As the impact statement shows, we are projecting that the schools that serve this area will become significantly overcrowded in the next few years, even before factoring in any redevelopment. Stuart High School, which serves the area under consideration, is already projected to be 520 students over capacity by the 2018-19 school year. Glasgow Middle School is projected to be 278 students over capacity. Sleepy Hollow Elementary, which serves much of the Willston area, is expected to be just right about at capacity or a bit over, before new development.

If the redevelopment of this area moves forward with the number of new housing units under consideration, we could expect to see many hundreds

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more children coming into these schools. How are they to be accommodated? As a School Board member, I believe it is imperative that the Task Force and the county answer that question before recommending any specific proposal.

The School Board has a longstanding request for the county to return the Willston Center, which previously served as an elementary school, to the school system. The county and the school system have regularly discussed the idea of creating true community schools, and this site in my opinion would provide an excellent opportunity to combine classroom space with other vibrant community use. If the final recommendation is to use that site for a purpose other than a school, I ask that you identify the alternative for serving the hundreds more elementary school students we would expect to see coming into this area, as well as those at the middle and high school levels.

You have created some excellent goals for this area, including the "sense of place" envisioned by Objective 9. While you include civic gathering spaces, public parks and a transit facility as part of that objective, the vision is incomplete without schools, which are at the heart of any true community.

Thank you again for your thoughtful consideration and for your service to our community.

Sincerely,



Sandy Evans
Mason District

SE/mkf

Cc: Penny Gross
Karen Garza
Jeff Platenberg
Joanne Fiebe
(distribution to the Task Force Members)