

**FAIRFAX COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
SCHOOLS COMMITTEE/
FACILITIES PLANNING ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING
THURSDAY, MARCH 14, 2013**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Frank A. de la Fe, Hunter Mill District
Ellen J. Hurley, Braddock District
Timothy J. Sargeant, Commissioner At-Large, Chairman

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Jay P. Donahue, Dranesville District
John L. Litzenberger, Jr., Sully District

OTHER COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Earl L. Flanagan, Mount Vernon District
James R. Hart, Commissioner At-Large
Peter F. Murphy, Springfield District

FACILITIES PLANNING ADVISORY COUNCIL (FPAC) MEMBERS PRESENT:

Karen Hogan, At-Large, Chair
Daniel Aminoff, Mason District, Vice Chairman
Charles Hookey, Braddock District, Secretary

FAIRFAX COUNTY STAFF PRESENT:

Ajay Rawat, Coordinator, Office of Facilities Planning Services, Department of
Facilities and Transportation Services (FTS), Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS)
Gregory Bokan, Planner, Office of Facilities Planning Services, FTS, FCPS
Marianne R. Gardner, Director, Planning Division (PD), Department of Planning and Zoning
(DPZ)
Chris Caperton, Chief, Facilities Planning Branch, PD, DPZ
Barbara J. Lippa, Executive Director, Planning Commission Office
Kara A. DeArrastia, Clerk to the Planning Commission

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Letter dated February 22, 2013, to Meghan Van Dam, Chief, Policy and Plan Development Branch, DPZ, from Denise M. James, Director, Office of Facilities Planning Services, FCPS, regarding the Comprehensive Plan Work Program
- B. Letter dated February 7, 2013, to Sharon Bulova, Chair, Board of Supervisors, from Ilryong Moon, Chairman and At-Large Representative, Fairfax County School Board, regarding the Capital Improvement Funding Limit
- C. Letter dated February 13, 2013, to the Honorable Ilryong Moon, Chairman and At-Large Member, Fairfax County School Board, from Sharon Bulova, Chair, Board of Supervisors

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Planning Commission Vice Chairman Frank A. de la Fe constituted the Schools Committee at 7:04 p.m. in the Board Conference Room of the Fairfax County Government Center, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax, Virginia, 22035, pursuant to Section 4-102 of the Commission's *Bylaws & Procedures*. He indicated that the first order of business was to elect a Committee chairperson.

Commissioner Hurley MOVED TO NOMINATE TIMOTHY J. SARGEANT AS CHAIRMAN OF THE 2013 SCHOOLS COMMITTEE.

Commissioner de la Fe seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

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Commissioner de la Fe MOVED APPROVAL OF THE JANUARY 24, 2013 MINUTES.

Commissioner Hurley seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

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FAIRFAX FORWARD

Marianne Gardner, Director, Planning Division (PD), Department of Planning and Zoning (DPZ), noted that her office had received a letter from the Fairfax County Public Schools' (FCPS) Facilities Planning Office proposing 11 items be added to the Comprehensive Plan Amendment Work Program, as outlined in Attachment A. She said she anticipated that once staff could make a solid recommendation about the anticipated timeframe and steps to be undertaken for a Plan amendment, this information would be presented to the Planning Commission for a decision as to whether to amend the current Work Program or incorporate the proposal into the regular amendment process.

Ajay Rawat, Coordinator, Office of Facilities Planning Services, Department of Facilities and Transportation Services (FTS), FCPS, stated that flexibility needed to be built into Comprehensive Plan language to ensure that FCPS facilities would accommodate the changing needs of students. He said he also envisioned changes to traditional school buildings to accommodate student growth and opportunities for new partnerships for shared or enhanced school facilities.

In response to a question from Commissioner Hurley, Ms. Gardner explained that staff would explore potential Policy Plan changes to school classifications and consider developing a master plan for each school site.

Gregory Bokan, Planner, Office of Facilities Planning Services, FTS, FCPS, noted the importance of incorporating Plan language pertaining to the sharing or co-location of public facilities that involved reciprocal use of facilities by schools, parks, libraries, and other public agencies. He also emphasized the importance of reviewing and updating the Countywide Objectives and Policies to ensure the accuracy and consistency with potential changes from the

Public Schools Update in other portions of the Plan. Mr. Rawat pointed out that the objective of this review was not to locate multiple uses on existing or future school sites but to take advantage of opportunities for the co-location of several public facilities and services.

Commissioner de la Fe commented that school facilities should serve as a community resource. He added that school renovation projects could accommodate an apartment for the school custodian, which would provide housing, safety, and security. Mr. Rawat said he agreed with Commissioner de la Fe's remarks, noting that the co-location of uses was intended to be reciprocal.

Replying to questions from Commissioner Flanagan, Ms. Gardner explained that reviewing Comprehensive Plan guidance by neighborhood planning and activity center areas, as provided for by the new Fairfax Forward approach, would include a school impact component. However, she noted that the existing policies and subsequent Policy Plan amendments providing guidance for schools would need to be examined separately.

Answering a question from Commissioner Hart, Ms. Gardner stated that changes to public facilities would still warrant the 2232 review process for recommendation as a "feature shown" on the Comprehensive Plan.

Commissioner Murphy commented that shared facilities between the Park Authority (FCPA) and the School Board could serve as a practical solution to problems faced by these public entities and a cost-effective, inexpensive means of serving the community if the proposal made sense, had merit, and complied with the appropriate land use guidelines. Daniel Aminoff, Mason District representative and Vice Chairman of the Facilities Planning Advisory Council (FPAC), pointed out that County public safety agencies had participated in the co-location and sharing of facilities.

Responding to a question from Commissioner Hurley, Mr. Rawat noted that several community uses that took advantage of school buildings in the County. He said he would research whether FCPS needed to seek special permission to allow others, such as church or community groups, to use its facilities. Chairman Sargeant emphasized the need to be more cognizant of the hours of operation for these facilities if there were an increased variety of uses.

Commissioner de la Fe pointed out that the School Board would inform the Planning Commission regarding its needs for school facilities. In response, Mr. Rawat explained that DPZ and FCPS staff would engage in a periodic review of the existing locations and status of all school facilities and identify future needs with site-specific recommendations in the appropriate area plans to reflect additional student growth from future residential development. Ms. Gardner added that school-related issues would continue to be addressed in the Public Facilities section of the Policy Plan Element of the Comprehensive Plan. She said she envisioned that a comprehensive review of schools in the Plan would be initiated by FCPS staff and the School Board.

Commissioner de la Fe stressed the importance of being cognizant of changing conditions, capacity, and land availability when identifying schools for co-location opportunities.

In reply to a question from Chairman Sargeant, Ms. Gardner stated that DPZ and FCPS staff would assess the 11 proposed items and determine the appropriate scope of work and anticipated timeframe. She said she thought that this effort would require substantial time to complete.

Answering a question from Commissioner Flanagan, Ms. Gardner indicated that some of the 11 items were related to the Zoning Ordinance, but they all focused on land use and not programmatic issues.

In response to a question from Ms. Rawat, Ms. Gardner clarified that staff in the Zoning Administration Division of DPZ would handle the Zoning Ordinance-related issues while PD staff would handle the issues related to the Public Facilities section of the Policy Plan.

Commissioner Hart pointed out that the Board of Supervisors would soon consider an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance regarding the enforcement of large signs that identify the school and announce awards and upcoming events with flashing text. He suggested that this matter be discussed at a future Committee meeting. Commissioner Hurley replied that the school's Parent Teacher Association (PTA) or Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) often paid for the installation of those signs at school sites.

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CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CIP)

Mr. Aminoff stated that with the approval of the CIP for Fiscal Years (FY) 2014-2018, the School Board had requested that the Board of Supervisors increase the FCPS' capital funding limit from \$155 million to \$180 million per year effective in FY 2015, as explained in a letter from School Board Chairman Ilryong Moon (Attachment B). He noted that a majority of the school bond funds were diverted to handle maintenance issues. Mr. Aminoff said FPAC was charged with advising and informing FCPS staff and the School Board in the development of comprehensive, long-term plans for facility needs in the most effective and efficient way. He added that FPAC opposed the idea of allocating capital improvement funds to operational expenses. He explained that although the County theoretically had enough "seats" for all FCPS students, many of the available seats within the system were far removed from students' locations.

Commissioner Flanagan said language should be added to the Policy Plan to address the seat availability issue. Mr. Aminoff concurred, adding that Capacity and Space Guideline Number 1 in the FPAC Strategic Facilities Plan stated, "Existing program capacity within the County will be efficiently utilized prior to funding construction of additional capacity."

Commissioner Flanagan commented that the teardown of existing buildings and replacement with larger buildings would consume significantly more energy than reusing the buildings.

Karen Hogan, At-Large representative and Chair of FPAC, stated that FPAC examined data produced by FCPS professional demographic and planning staff regarding student enrollment projections as a basis for capacity decision-making. She noted, for example, that schools

committed a considerable number of classrooms for community use during school hours, such as the School Age Child Care (SACC) and preschool programs, although they were not part of the direct delivery of educational services to the students. Therefore, she explained that collaborating with other County facilities, such as a community center, to design shared spaces that met multiple community requirements was important and helped restore that classroom space.

Calling attention to the School Board's decision to close Clifton Elementary School, Chairman Sargeant noted that it was a challenge to balance the utilization of capacity and space with available seats. Mr. Aminoff said this was a considerable challenge given the limited resources. He added that the County supported neighborhood schools and opposed busing students for hours to a distant school.

Commissioner Hurley suggested that when considering school boundary adjustments, the transportation aspect should be evaluated to ensure that students were bused to the closest school. She also suggested that FCPS stop spending bond funds on operations and maintenance, such as school supplies and other disposables, and focus on reasonable capital projects. In response, Ms. Hogan indicated that Operations and Maintenance Guideline Number 4 in the FPAC Strategic Facilities Plan stated, "FCPS will use resources from the school operating fund to operate and maintain school infrastructure, rather than rely on capital funds to compensate for an inadequately funded maintenance program." She added that this became problematic when pressure was exerted on the operational budget, essentially removing funds from the classroom so it required a balance.

Commissioner Hurley pointed out that the revenue derived from high school students paying for parking spaces at their school should be expended toward the maintenance of those parking lots, instead of being allocated to the General Fund. In addition, she noted that the SACC program was only offered after and before school; therefore, the SACC-designated classrooms should be used for educational purposes during the school day, which had already been implemented at some of the schools.

Referring to a letter from Sharon Bulova, Chair of the Board of Supervisors, as shown in Attachment C, Commissioner Hart noted that in addition to schools, public safety, libraries, and other County agencies encountered a growing list of capital needs. He expressed support for the approach proposed by Chairman Bulova to establish a working group consisting of three members of the Board of Supervisors and three members of the School Board, which would focus on the school system and County governments' capital needs and examine the fiscal constraints faced by these entities.

Replying to a question from Commissioner Flanagan, Mr. Aminoff said he believed that in situations where public buildings that had been converted to other uses that were not necessarily appropriate to those uses, the recovery of those buildings would be subject to the underlining zoning. He emphasized the need to focus on this issue, noting that the former Clifton Elementary Schools site was currently an idle asset. Commissioner Flanagan commented that the County was rich with possible school sites that might more adequately serve the student population and such opportunities should be carefully examined.

Mr. Aminoff cited the example of the Willston Multicultural Center, which occupied the former Willston School in Bailey's Crossroads, and was being considered as a possible co-location site for an elementary school as part of a reconfiguration in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). He said other co-location opportunities would be discussed as they became available.

Referring to 25-year renovation cycle described in Chairman Moon's letter, Commissioner Hurley pointed out that eight 1960s-era high schools that were pending renovation far exceeded this cycle. She stressed the need to emphasize, especially for those old high schools, that school facilities needed to be renovated sooner than 50-plus years. In agreement, Commissioner Flanagan noted that Chairman Moon's statement, "in fact, the average age of a school at the time of a renovation is nearly 33 years," should be changed to "the average age of a school at the time of a renovation is between 27 and 90 years" to enhance the significance of the issue.

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UPDATE TO SCHOOL PUBLIC FACILITIES IMPACT PROFFER FORMULA

Mr. Bokan stated that the School Public Facilities Impact Proffer Formula had been adopted by the Board of Supervisors and the School Board, effective January 7, 2003. He noted that the adopted methodology produced a suggested per student proffered contribution. He added that FPAC intended to revisit the structure of this complex formula. He said the Schools Policy Plan Update should also be linked to this review and potential update.

Mr. Aminoff explained that it was anticipated that periodic updates and adjustments would be made to the methodology to reflect changes in student yield ratios by unit type and changes in capital construction costs. He pointed out that properties within the Reston Planned Residential Community (PRC) District were not subject to the proffer criteria.

Commissioner de la Fe indicated that the original Reston PRC Plan did not identify any school sites, which now included such sites as the Reston Spectrum, Fairway Apartments, and Crescent Apartments. He also noted that the area surrounding the planned Metro stations in Reston did not apply to the PRC District and would be subject to proffered rezonings. He said the School Board had been working with a study group on identifying land to designate as urban school sites to accommodate the students expected to be generated by the approximately 30,000 housing units planned for rezoning and bounded by the proffer system.

Commissioner Murphy cautioned against turning the rezoning process into a "cash cow" or encouraging "rezoning for dollars" because it would set a terrible precedent. Although he said he was not opposed to a review of the proffer formula, he warned that an adjustment might create a situation where communities support a poor development proposal for the sole reason that it had it would contribute a significant amount of money to the schools.

Chairman Sargeant said he envisioned that proffered contributions for schools would compete with commitments for affordable housing, street grid and transit improvements, and other matters related to new development.

Mr. Aminoff pointed out that FPAC was considering the idea of proffered monetary contributions from commercial developments for offsetting impacts on public schools.

Commissioner Flanagan asked whether the formula structure and calculations encompassed the initial staffing costs for the new school facility in its first year of operation. Mr. Bokan replied that the proffered contribution was calculated by the cost for each square foot of construction at the elementary, middle, and high school level, and adjusted for a system-wide average.

Commissioner de la Fe indicated that the formula was contingent on current construction costs, which were evaluated every two years.

Commissioner Hurley commented that the purpose of the contribution was to provide for the actual development and construction of additional school facilities, but once the building was operational, County tax revenues would pay for its operational costs.

Commissioner Flanagan said he thought that the first-year cost of the building should be incorporated into the methodology and this cost should be separated from the subsequent years of operation. In response, Mr. Bokan noted that FCPS staff tracked the receipt of the proffer money and ensured that it was allocated to the designated school budget.

Commissioner de la Fe noted that the County could not replace school proffer commitments with development impact fees. He explained that the formula and student yield ratio were derived from the number of students estimated to be generated by a new residential development beyond those generated by the by-right development potential. He added that this calculation did not apply to developments in the Reston PRC District, such as Fairway Apartments.

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LONG-TERM AGENDA ITEMS

Commissioner de la Fe said he would be interested in learning about the factors causing the increase in FCPS student enrollment. Mr. Rawat replied that one such factor was a shift in demographics. For example, the increase in the percentage of Asian and Hispanic populations in the County had contributed to a considerable increase in the birth rate. Therefore, in areas that were predominantly Asian or Hispanic, the birth rates were considerably higher than in those areas with negligible Hispanic or Asian populations. Another factor was related to the County's net emigration and immigration rates.

Answering a question from Mr. Aminoff, Chris Caperton, Chief, Facilities Planning Branch, PD, DPZ, explained that it had been almost one year since the inception of a new review process involving FCPS and DPZ staff to confirm that a proposed school expansion was in accord with the Comprehensive Plan. He noted that DPZ and FCPS staff in coordination with Dranesville District Supervisor John Foust and Providence District Supervisor Linda Smyth would evaluate the efficiency of the process and determine whether modifications or improvements should be made. He suggested that this matter be added to a future agenda for discussion by this Committee.

Mr. Rawat stated that the FCPS demographer could deliver a presentation to the Committee at a future meeting, detailing the methodology used to project student enrollment. Mr. Rawat also noted the demographic shifts due to economic conditions and unfriendly immigration policies from neighboring jurisdictions.

Commissioner Hurley recommended that the following environmental issues be considered for discussion at future Committee meetings:

- Case study of the use of an underground stormwater management facility constructed with stackable modular plastic units at Mason Crest Elementary School;
- Installation of geothermal wells at new or renovated school construction sites; and
- Comparison between the green building policy adopted by FCPS and the green building standards for County buildings under the Sustainable Development Policy for Capital Facilities.

Mr. Aminoff pointed out that FPAC was considering how FCPS could take advantage of Qualified Energy Conservation Bonds to provide necessary additional resources for improved energy management, energy efficiency, renewable energy, and other resource management across the FCPS physical infrastructure.

Chairman Sargeant announced that the Committee was scheduled to meet again on Thursday, April 18, 2013, at 7 p.m. in the Board Conference Room. He also thanked everyone for engaging in productive discussions.

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The meeting was adjourned at 8:12 p.m.
Timothy J. Sargeant, Chairman

An audio recording of this meeting is available in the Planning Commission Office, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Suite 330, Fairfax, Virginia 22035.

Minutes by: Kara A. DeArrastia

Approved: April 18, 2013

Kara A. DeArrastia, Clerk to the
Fairfax County Planning Commission



FAIRFAX COUNTY
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Department of Facilities and Transportation Services
Office of Facilities Planning Services
8115 Gatehouse Road, Suite 3300
Falls Church, Virginia 22042

February 22, 2013

TO: Meghan Van Dam, Branch Chief
Policy and Plan Development
Fairfax County Department of Planning & Zoning

FROM: Denise M. James, Director *dmj*
Office of Facilities Planning Services

SUBJECT: Comprehensive Plan Work Program

Thank you for the opportunity to review the "pilot" Comprehensive Plan Amendment Work Program. We appreciate the opportunity to continue to participate in this process. The Work Program currently proposes an item #8 for "Public Schools." The noted purpose of the item is to evaluate school classifications and adding new mapping symbols for other school facilities. While these efforts are still important as noted in our prior September 21, 2011 memo, Facilities Planning would like to propose a more comprehensive review of schools in the Comprehensive Plan. As part of this review we would like to look at several areas of the Plan as listed below.

Policy Plan

1. A review of the Residential Development Criteria. As part of these criteria, we would like to review the impact mitigation language to understand the extent to which this language is appropriate for the acceptance of a variety of in-kind contributions and how it could be improved to provide maximum flexibility.
 - a. Linked to this is a review and potential update of proffer methodology/formula currently used by the schools.
2. A review of the Non-Residential Development Criteria. Economic growth impacts schools as jobs bring more families and children into the County. Opportunities may be available for in-kind contributions from commercial developments for FCPS schools/facilities.
3. A review of the Public Facilities Element is recommended to update the existing introductory language for schools and address the items noted in the proposed work plan (evaluation of the school classifications and classification of other facilities such as Administrative Buildings or Bus Facilities). Linked to this is a need to discuss what flexibility can be built in to these classifications.
4. A review and update of County-wide Objectives and Policies would also be prudent to ensure the currency and consistency with potential changes from this review to other portions of the plan and to reflect current trends.
5. A review of the other Policy Elements such as location and guidelines of schools. Schools are mentioned in other Elements of the Policy Plan and should be reviewed. It is important to ensure language for the sharing or co-location of public facilities involves reciprocal use of facilities by

multiple public agencies, and opportunities for new partnerships for shared facilities or other opportunities to enhance school facilities are explored.

Area Plans

6. A review and audit of the existing locations and status of all existing facilities would be appropriate and should be consistent to reflect any changes to school classifications or the introduction of other facilities.
7. The identification of future needs with site specific recommendations where possible to ensure consistency and alignment, to the extent possible, between the Area Plan and the CIP.

Facilities Map

8. Revisions to the map based on any changes in school classifications or updates to the Area Plans.
9. A review of how to include "Other school facilities" on the map.

Other Items

10. A review of how shared facilities are accounted for or recommended in the plan. Do they need be referenced in an Area Plan, or on the Facilities Map, or both?
11. What opportunities are available to incorporate or link the Facilities Planning Advisory Council's Strategic Plan to the Comprehensive Plan? Are there other plans that may be related to schools that would be appropriate to reference or link?

We look forward to the opportunity to discuss these items further with you and what the process would be to get them included in the Work Program. Thank you again for the opportunity to provide comments on this item.

As our public school system moves into the 21st Century, we envision change to education specifications and traditional buildings which embrace greater reliance on technology, distance learning, and variable school calendars to accommodate student growth. Flexibility and adaption will be become increasingly important to ensure our facilities will continue to meet the needs of our students.

DMJ/gjb

cc: Jeffrey Platenberg, Assistant Superintendent, Facilities and Transportation Services
 Lee Ann Pender, Director, Administrative Services
 Ajay Rawat, Coordinator, Facilities Planning Services
 FPAC

**MEMORANDUM**

February 7, 2013

Fairfax County School Board

TO: *Sharon*
Sharon Bulova, Chairman
Fairfax County Board of Supervisors

FROM: Ilryong Moon, Chairman and At-Large Representative
Fairfax County School Board

SUBJECT: Capital Improvement Funding Limit

The School Board established a policy which reflects the accepted industry standard that a school should be renovated on a 25-year interval to ensure that the facility has the ability to support the educational program of studies through appropriately-sized and equipped learning spaces. In addition, renovations ensure that a building is more efficient and capable of providing the necessary capacity, the safest and healthiest environment for our students, faculty and community members. Unfortunately, due to our increasing enrollment, we are not able to meet the 25-year standard – in fact, the average age of a school at the time of a renovation is nearly 33 years.

In order to achieve a 25-year renovation cycle and address the needs of increasing student enrollment, FCPS would need to spend approximately \$205 million per year. We regrettably acknowledge that this amount is well in excess of the current capital funding of \$155 million. The table below illustrates the current dilemma regarding the timing of the renovations due to our overwhelming spending shortfall.

School Type	Schools by Type	Renovations per Bond Cycle @ 25 Years	Current Renovations per Bond Cycle
Elementary	141	12	5.8
Middle	26	2	0.8
High	25	2	0.9

The current renovation cycle of 32 years will grow exponentially worse over time which will reduce our ability to draw down the 911 temporary classrooms in our current inventory. This problem is compounded as we are allocating 11% of our capital funding to major maintenance in the form of infrastructure management each bond cycle. In spite of these limitations, we continue to focus on our most important goal of providing seats for our students. Last year we added 4,305 seats to our inventory and will add another 16,000 through additions, new schools and renovations over the next 8 years.

With the approval of the FY 2014-2018 Capital Improvement Program for Fairfax County Public Schools, the School Board formally approved a motion to request that the Board of Supervisors increase the School Board's capital funding limit from \$155 million to \$180 million per year effective in FY 2015, and that the formal request be transmitted to the Board of Supervisors with the School Board's approved FY 2014-2018 Capital Improvement Program.

Sharon Bulova
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February 7, 2013

In making this request for an additional \$25 million in capital spending authority, the School Board acknowledges that the Board of Supervisors has adopted very prudent and appropriate guidelines for debt service that help maintain its AAA bond rating. Two of these guidelines speak to debt service as a percentage of the County's Combined General Fund disbursements and to total net debt as a percentage of estimated (real property) market value. Currently, the County reports their debt service ratio is at 8.8% and the net debt as a percentage of estimated market value of real property is at 1.18%. The County's principles for sound financial management have established that these amounts are to remain less than 10% and 3%, respectively.

Based on the information received from the County, the request for \$25 million more per year in capital funding will not cause the County to exceed those important guidelines. This additional funding would allow the school system to continue to address student enrollment increases and to accelerate the renovations of many schools that have been waiting far too long. We estimate that this additional funding could accelerate future renovations by as much as two to three years.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this request for \$25 million in additional capital spending authority. Renovating and maintaining our schools in a timely and efficient manner is good stewardship that serves all of Fairfax County.

IM/Is

cc: School Board
Leadership Team
Facilities Planning Advisory Council

PK

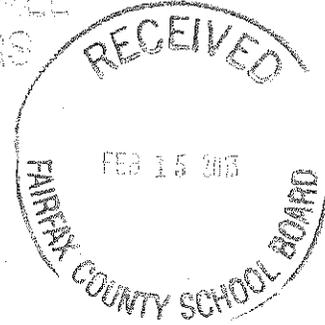


COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
County of Fairfax
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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SHARON BULOVA
CHAIRMAN

REC'D BY ALL
MEMBERS



February 13, 2013

The Honorable Ilryong Moon
Chairman and At-Large Member
Fairfax County School Board
8115 Gatehouse Road, Suite 5400
Falls Church, VA 22042

Dear Chairman Moon:

Thank you for your recent memorandum explaining the Fairfax County School Board's concerns over capital funding for Fairfax County Public Schools. I understand your concerns regarding the growing student population and the need to maintain and renovate facilities to continue to provide a first-class educational environment.

I share your belief that Fairfax County Public Schools are one of our chief public assets. However, as you know from County Executive Ed Long's presentation to our Boards in November, revenue is projected to grow slowly in the short term. Despite this challenging climate, there is a growing list of capital needs for both the school system and county government including projects which have already been delayed, so our Boards need to work together to find a way to address them responsibly.

As part of the County's budget process this year, I will establish a working group by Board Matter consisting of three members of the Board of Supervisors and three members of the School Board which will focus on the school system and county governments' capital needs and examine the fiscal constraints we are working under. This working group will meet regularly and routinely report out to our respective Boards as we work on the FY2014 budget.

I look forward to the continued collaboration between our Boards through this working group and throughout the budget process for FY2014.

Sincerely,

Sharon Bulova

Cc: The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors
The Fairfax County School Board
County Executive Ed Long
Superintendent Jack Dale
Susan Datta, Chief Financial Officer, Department of Management and Budget.