

Franconia Master Plan Revision

PUBLIC COMMENT MEETING

April 1, 7:00 P.M. At Key Middle School

Meeting Summary:

A Public Comment Meeting was held on the evening of April 1, 2014 to present Franconia Park Master Plan revision. The meeting began with introductions by Judy Petersen. After a brief description of the Master Plan by Andy Galusha, the floor was open to speakers for comment.

Other Officials and Staff in Attendance:

Jeff McKay, Lee District, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors
Ed Batten, Lee District, Fairfax County Park Authority Board
Kirk Kincannon, Director, Fairfax County Park Authority
Cindy Messinger, Deputy Director/CFO, Fairfax County Park Authority
Sara Baldwin, Deputy Director/COO, Fairfax County Park Authority
Dave Bowden, Director, Planning & Development Division, Fairfax County Park Authority
Sandy Stallman, Manager, Park Planning Branch, Fairfax County Park Authority
Andy Galusha, Landscape Architect/Planner and Project Manager, Fairfax County Park Authority
Phil Hager, Area 4 Manager, Fairfax County Park Authority
Mary Olien, Green Spring Gardens Manager, Fairfax County Park Authority
Kristen Sinclair, Natural Resources Specialist, Fairfax County Park Authority
Patricia Dietly, Garden Plot Coordinator, Fairfax County Park Authority
Diana Fuentes, Administrative Assistant, Public Information Office, Fairfax County Park Authority
Taylor Dixon, Recreation Specialist, Neighborhood & Community Services

Staff Presentation

Andy Galusha, project manager, provided a brief presentation of the Draft Master Plan Revision

Public Comment:

Following the presentation, Judy Pedersen moderated an open public comment period so those in attendance could share their impressions of the park and input on its future. The following is a summary of each speaker's comments expressed during this session, after which, the meeting adjourned.

Speaker Number **01** Group/Organization:

* Likes the park the way it is. No more buildings. Wants more nature. Park is already very busy with lots of people & cars. I just enjoy nature and animals. Please leave the park as it is. We could add more trees, that would be nice. I love nature better than buildings.

Speaker Number **02** Group/Organization:

* Park should be left the way it is. Don't add more things to the park. Nature is the best thing in the world, we need it. Adding all those things to the park there is no park and no nature left. It is already busy as it is, that makes me sad. I like sledding in the winter or just walking among the trees. Please do not add or change more

Speaker Number **03** Group/Organization:

* When we moved here the park was a safe place for the family, now we've added more fields and more games, more lights, music and cars. There are too many strangers, too many things going on, not as safe as it used to be. We've been asked to leave the park because we were in the way of soccer players. We are just people who enjoy the park and don't really have a voice. The park is open late at night even though it was said it is closed at dark, truly it isn't. There are lights on until 11pm. Should we add more trees? Yes! Do we need all these

buildings? I don't think so. The way it is is fine. Is this a District Park? Well, it is in a neighborhood. We get the cars and the noise and the people. Neighborhood gets the brunt. We have a voice and sometimes not adding anything is a good thing. Add trees and make it a neighborhood park because it is in a neighborhood.

Speaker Number **04** Group/Organization:

* Lived in the neighborhood for 15 years. Always enjoyed the park and walking. Since we've added the fields with lights it has lowered the quality of life in the neighborhood. On southwest side of the park, kids like to sled in the winter. It's not on the master plan but that's what we do. There is a dual vendor pad right in the path where we come down the hill. Also, the new parking at the Bowie entrance is on the sledding path. Parking will cause a problem for the sledding. Would like to see sledding added to the plan. With the many changes, it will draw too many people and cars to the park. Right now people race in there to get to their soccer games. See a lot of Maryland tags, they are not from the neighborhood or even Virginia. Changes will negatively impact the wildlife. The overall changes will reduce the quality of life in the neighborhood.

Speaker Number **05** Group/Organization:

* I don't think we should overly plan this Park. As a park there should be nature as well as activity. Soccer games and activities are good exercise but I think we should leave it as close to what it is now. The more people that come, it won't be much of a neighborhood park anymore. We all live here, it's not just about other people coming here, we also use it!

Speaker Number **06** Group/Organization:

* As a neighbor, I'm opposed to further development in the park. As there are 421 other parks, it seems a shame that you seem to focus on one of the few parks that is nestled in a neighborhood. It's going to benefit people that are not even a part of the neighborhood. It seems like a misuse of the stewardship of the resources. The plan timeline did not speak of consideration of comments. The park gates do not close. The park is open until the field lights go off and that is often 12 midnight. When that does happen the cars start and tailgate parties start and there is a tremendous amount of noise. Neighbors clean the park on a regular basis. There is so much trash in the park now that to add more to it would only increase the traffic flow through the neighborhood, putting neighbors at risk and it would increase the trash.

Speaker Number **07** Group/Organization:

* Have learned to love the park, live next door to it. Get to see a lot of the things that happen each day. This park is a gem in the community. We look at it as a neighborhood park. The key to every park is balance, the symbiotic relationship between nature and the activities that go on. The changes make it look more like a sports complex than a park. There are already many fields and the parking lots that support those fields are overflowing. Even doubling the parking will barely address the needs of the activities currently going on. Very concerned about the roadways coming into the park and the safety of the kids in the neighborhood. Cars go very fast coming in and the wear and tear on the roads make them in poor shape. Don't know how the infrastructure will hold up to any increase. Current traffic is backing up at Franconia Road when there are cross country events, how much more will the backup be when there are more fields all leaving at one time.

Speaker Number **08** Group/Organization: **Sierra Football Club**

* Support parks, children, families. Watched in Fairfax County grow. Our club develops soccer players from 5-19 years old. In the last 15 years we have developed 125-175 kids and sent them to college. We don't have a home park. Somewhere there needs to be a resource for these kids needs. If it is possible to put more rectangle fields somewhere else that would be great, but if you can't do that and the opportunity is there for Franconia to be a place where the kids can come, I think it is a good thing. We have approximately 45-55 children from ages 5-12. We've been scheduled at Franconia and got bumped. We got sent to Ossian Hall Park in Annandale. I live 1 1/2 miles from here, my vice president lives on Thomas Drive. Our kids have to go to Annandale but can't play at Franconia because there is not enough space for all the clubs around. Live 50 feet

from Manchester Lakes but are not allowed to play there. Lee District just went online but we can't play there. Have kids from schools in this area but they can't play here. There are some benefits to having resources for children. We get them off the streets and in some activity. Ours is also a scholastic program where we transition to college, we need to provide a resource. Please try to make it happen.

Speaker Number **09**

Group/Organization: **Monticello Woods Residents**

* My name is TJ Willis, I, along with my wife Lindsey, are residents of the Monticello Woods neighborhood and our home is on the border of Franconia District Park. Tonight I am also representing a large group of concerned Monticello Woods residents who have been meeting to discuss the draft master plan for the park. At this time, if you are a neighbor that has participated in one of these meetings and are concerned about the major impact this plan will have on our neighborhood, please stand. Thank you. I would like to submit, for the record, an electronic and paper copy of my prepared remarks that I respectfully request be entered into the minutes for tonight's meeting. To read the draft plan of the Franconia Park Master Plan Revision dated November 13, 2013, one would get the sense that the Monticello Neighborhood and the parks that surround us are form an idyllic retreat that shields us from the hectic pace of life in the Washington DC area. Children frolic on the athletic fields while families picnic and residents take leisurely strolls on existing paths that cut through the woods. Many of the park users walk or skateboard to the park, which is wellmaintained and has a low crime rate. Gates are locked every night at the entrances, and signs clearly instruct users on the park rules, one of those being that the park is closed at dark. This vision of the park is in direct contrast to the reality of living in the neighborhood and having to deal with the problems that the park is causing. The synthetic turf field and first set of lights that were installed a few years ago in particular have provided a powerful insight into the multitude of problems that will come to pass if the vision outlined in this plan comes to fruition. There are no bus stops anywhere near the park and very few pedestrians walk there due to it's remote location in the far corner of the neighborhood. The main mode of transportation is vehicular, usually with cars containing only one or two passengers. These cars frequently speed through the neighborhood, ignoring stop signs and historically causing severe damage to cars legally parked by residents on the streets. The narrow, twisting, and hilly streets are an irresistible temptation for some drivers to speed excessively, burn out, and loudly tout what are often illegal muffler modifications and loud stereos with thumping bass. This frequently occurs between 9 and 11:30 at night or later, 10 yards from many of our windows, forcing us to keep our windows shut and blinds drawn. These drivers pose a clear and present danger to the increasing amount of children that have become residents in recent years. When police are called by residents to help control the traffic issues, they can do little unless they catch someone in the act. Due to the constantly rotating roster of users to the park, it does no good to set up roadblocks, speed traps, or other traffic calming measures because a different group uses the park every night and therefore ongoing "education" by ticketing cannot be implemented. Most of us have given up on calling the police because it does not good and we don't want to be seen as a burden to emergency services. Given my location and view of the street, I could call the police just about daily, but what can they do about infractions that they can't see? Absolutely nothing. The so-called "buffer zone" of trees between the park and the bordering houses on the Thomas Dr. side is almost non-existent. Residents have to contend with high-intensity lights that are visible throughout the hilly neighborhood and shine into bedrooms late at night and sometimes into early morning (times such as now when the timers have not synced with daylight savings). They wake up to trash thrown in their backyards. One of my neighbors who backs to the park has had his pool vandalized three times in the last year, to which police again have limited powers to act unless they can catch the vandals in the act. The solution that the police have suggested? Install infrared cameras at the owner's expense. Fights and a stabbing several years ago has prompted an increase in police patrols, which places extra pressure on an already overburdened police force. The lack of restrooms and changing facilities has caused users of the park to use our yards as places to change and relieve themselves. 3 porta potties located at the furthest point possible away from the playing fields is not sufficient. A field that sees this much use needs dedicated (and expensive to build and support) restrooms and changing facilities. Refuse overwhelms the entire park, especially on the unmaintained dirt tracks through the woods that the County classifies as "trails".

Neighbors are the only ones that care enough to pick up the trash, much of it generated by those using the secluded area as spot to use drugs or drink alcohol. Trees that border the park fall, sometimes they are cut up by maintenance crews, but most of the time they are left to rot. Residents are left to either look at the eyesore or clean it up themselves, (example). The parking lot has not been paved in years. Maintenance is spotty at best, with some field maintenance duties relying upon dedicated volunteers who devote a vast amount of time in this endeavor. The draft plan mentions that "gates are locked every night." This is patently false - any resident will tell you that the gates are rusted in the "open" position and padlocked in place. Trees grow in front of one, and a sign blocks the other from closure. It's an unmanned park, there is nobody to close or open the gates. The list goes on, and many of us in Monticello Woods are wondering why these numerous and well-founded concerns that were raised by residents at the initial planning meeting in July were not taken into consideration with this draft plan. It is our opinion that there is only one group that is benefiting from this master plan revision, and those are the adult users of the field that use the field until late hours. The plan refers to a need from Fairfax County Schools, and for the youth of the area to get access to more fields at Franconia, but the reality is that very few youth ever use the fields. Children aren't using the fields after 9:00 PM. At this time I would like to take the opportunity to address the youth and adult league supporters that are here tonight. We want to make it abundantly clear that we take no personal issue with adult recreation leagues and their membership. The activities themselves are beneficial to the community and create an outlet for recreation that should absolutely be encouraged. The vast majority of your membership are respectful of our neighborhood and the surrounding area. The problems that we are outlining come from a FEW individuals (and as is often the case it only takes a few to make a big impact) from SOME teams, and also from SOME so-called "fringe" users who do not have permits and show up to the field to play pick-up games. We encourage the RESPONSIBLE development of lighted synthetic fields. There are two perfect examples of these lighted athletic fields that have recently been built (completed within the last 3 years), one in Long Bridge Park near Crystal City in an old industrial area, and Witter Recreational Fields next to the police and government center in Alexandria. These well-built facilities include all the needed infrastructure including major surface roads, restroom and changing facilities, and, most importantly, their locations do not impact residential neighborhoods. No one cares if these facilities are used until 3:00 in the morning every day - it won't impact the rest of the community like it does here in Monticello Woods. There are numerous statements in the plan such as the one found in Section VII. E. which reads "New facilities shown in the master plan are likely [LIKELY] constructed in phases as funding becomes available." We take this to mean that the park authority has the right to build additional lighted athletic fields without having to address any of the infrastructure needed to support them. The park authority has incentive, not only from permitting fees, but through pressure from the County to build the fields before any of the required supporting infrastructure. This is already evidenced by the existing lighted synthetic field and it's lack of supporting infrastructure. The draft plan offers very little in the way of neighborhood use. There is one small playground area, a small dog park, and a small "open play" area that is about 40 yards by 40 yards. Given that all of the fields are permitted, the only place for me to take my nephew to throw a ball around will be in this small space. The more likely scenario will be that given there is no space for other teams to warm up, that space will be taken over by other permitted field users. This leaves me as a resident that lives 20 yards away from a park that for all intents and purposes, I will not be able to use. But I will have the responsibility of taking care of it, picking up the trash, and dealing with all of the other negative impacts. The Fairfax County Park Authority website has information on all of the District Parks in the county that are accessed by vehicular traffic. Of the 34 District Parks in Fairfax County, 29 of them are able to be accessed via "non-residential streets". Users of those parks do not have to travel through neighborhoods to enter those parks. Franconia District Park (Springfield Planning District) and Martin Luther King District Park (Mt. Vernon Planning District) are accessible only via neighborhood streets. The draft plan mentions several times that usage plans are based on classification of the park. While Franconia Park by its size qualifies as a District Park, it's residential/neighborhood location is a much more important factor to consider as any changes are made to the Master Plan. This area was never designed to accommodate the traffic that runs through it, and no amount of studying the problems along with so-called "traffic calming measures" are going to

stop it. The original master plan of 1974 was flawed, and continued reliance on its guidance as an athletic-only facility found in the latest draft continues to be flawed. The park plan states "Park master plans are updated as necessary to reflect community and park changes over time" (Section I. A.)" Further, not mentioned in the draft plan but found in the Fairfax County Park Policy Manual, there is a provision that gives the "opportunity to reclassify a park as part of the master planning process." At this point it is worth mentioning one other document that can be found on the Fairfax County Website. The Synthetic Turf Task Force was formed in 2012 to study the development of synthetic turf fields. One of the recommendations published was the need for construction of 95 more synthetic fields so that Fairfax County will have the largest inventory of fields in the Washington DC area, "...the task force identified significant comparative shortfalls in available synthetic turf fields in the Mount Vernon and Lee Supervisory Districts." The findings of this task force were published in July of 2013. That same month the park authority held its first meeting to introduce the master plan revision process for Franconia Park. It's hard not to see the correlation between the drive of the County to create these fields and the Park Authority suddenly seeing a need to start revising the Master Plan for Franconia in the same month. How can a truly fair analysis of needs and desires of the community have any impact on the planning process when the County is predisposed to follow a certain path? You are mandated by law to hear our opinions and take great pains to encourage us to "plan your park," but are you actually listening? Because the draft plan that you have proposed tonight does not begin to address the myriad of issues that were brought up at the initial meeting in July. At the first meeting, and no doubt tonight, we will hear statements from the Park Authority to the effect of "this is just a dream plan", and "studies will have to be done before anything happens." To the residents I represent tonight, these are empty proclamations designed to get through the planning process and gain quick approval from the Board of Supervisors. To sum up our position, -We maintain that the park authority cannot take care of the facility they have now, and the current draft plan offers no concrete plan

Speaker Number 10

Group/Organization:

- * Too much planned. Dog park is 1/2 size of rectangle field, should be larger. Gates are not locked, what time are they locked and who does that? Vendor pad for dual vendor, is this the 1st and only dual pad? Five lighted fields will be a lot lighter than the one that is there now. Concern about restrooms in an unstaffed park.

Speaker Number 11

Group/Organization:

- * The proposed Franconia Park Master Plan Revision developed by the Fairfax County Parks Authority is a document that starts from an initial statement of fact and quickly embarks into a package that departs from fundamental precepts that should guide the Master Planning for this park. Those two precepts are stated on page 5 of the Master Plan Revision document. Franconia Park is "classified as a district park" and "is nestled among a residential neighborhood". It would seem that any master plan for the park would inventory the existing facility, particularly since it is NOT a regional park with dedicated access and infrastructure. If one looks closely at the existing facility and infrastructure, which is based on the 1974 Master Plan, and compares that plan to the current environment at the park, a considered, reasonable and pragmatic way ahead could be developed that truly takes into account the fundamental precept that Franconia Park "is nestled among a residential neighborhood." In fact, Franconia Park was carved out of an existing residential neighborhood in Monticello Woods. Since that approach does not exist in the Master Plan as currently written, the following is an attempt to describe some of the issues with the existing facility. Access: Driving through a neighborhood to get to the park and finding parking when single or multiple major events are occurring is more than a challenge - it can sometimes appear like navigating in a mall parking lot on "Black Friday". The two current parking lots are not adequate to support volume demand. Parking overflows onto Bowie, Thomas, Kroy, Cloud, Meriwether, Floridon and a host of other streets in the neighborhood. Driveways and intersections are often inaccessible - pitting the neighborhood against the park user. In the event of an accident or incident at an event in the park, it is not easy for emergency vehicles to quickly get to the scene. Safety: There are few impediments to speeding in the entire neighborhood - a couple of speed bumps on Meriwether and some neighborhood stop signs, some of which are only two way. On a regular basis, even Fairfax County vehicles ignore or power through the two way stop signs at the corner of Thomas and Bowie. While the number of younger children in the neighborhood is

beginning to increase, speeding continues unabated. Performance of "donuts", skidding, drag race starts and sliding through the neighborhood are common. The primary reason for the large boulders around the parking lots appears to be to preclude cars from driving right on to the park playing fields - they do nothing to stop motorcycles, scooters and other two wheeled vehicles; Sanitation: Today (29 March 2014), there are three portable potties located in the far corner of the Bowie entrance parking lot (none on the Cloud side, which is closer to the lighted Soccer Field). During busier times from early spring through late fall, more portable facilities are placed in the parking lots of the park. At no time are these facilities adjacent to the fields and they are not designed to be changing facilities. It is a fact that the surrounding wooded areas often see more use than those facilities. There is a need now for a permanent rest room area in the existing facility. Garbage collection bins are not located in proximity to all of the playing fields. Trash collection is sporadic during the offseason and not frequent enough to handle overflowing trash containers, particularly in high usage periods from early spring to late fall. Management and Upkeep: There are numerous other issues with Fairfax County's maintenance of the existing facility. They include: Parking lots are full of potholes and spaces poorly lined. This exacerbates the parking issues addressed earlier. Their condition, particularly when compared to Regional Parks, is terrible; Maintenance of the landscape is almost non-existent. Trees fall onto personal property, in some cases onto fences and other demarcations. Unless something blocks an entrance, it sits. When a fallen tree blocked the Bowie entrance this winter, the solution was to cut up the tree and toss the remnants into a wooded area adjacent to the nearest corner of the parking lot; All the Lights are supposed to be on until 11:00 PM for activities on the associated field, with one bank on about a half an hour longer so people can see to depart. Lights are often left on until way beyond that point and, if one knows where the box is, they can be switched back on at any time. Regular Police Patrol all the time is needed. It is prudent public policy to protect the users and the neighborhood from the few that would ruin the complex balance needed to operate a park, "nestled in a neighborhood". Currently, when there are major nighttime events at Franconia Park, sleeping with windows open is NOT an option for neighborhood residents. Speeding, rowdy behavior (eg. Jumping into swimming pools), fighting, underage drinking, drunk driving, drug use and dealing would all be curtailed simply through more regular, visible police patrols and presence. The rationale for this long discussion regarding the existing facilities at Franconia Park is to impart on the Fairfax County Park Authority master planners the need for more reasoned and considered planning. How well considered and planned is it to triple the number of lighted synthetic soccer fields and provide lights for the baseball and softball fields while only doubling the number of parking spaces? How well planned is it to add all the aforementioned sports upgrades as well as picnic areas and playgrounds without planning for a permanent rest room/changing area? How well planned is it to proceed with a master plan for the park without taking into account the impacts on neighborhood roads, public safety and other infrastructure issues? Asking the public to put a rubber stamp on a blueprint for the future that neglects the fundamental fact that Franconia Park is a district park nestled in a neighborhood with existing issues that are only exacerbated by this plan is totally and completely flawed. Using this plan as a foundation to ask the residents of Fairfax County for spending requests in the form of property tax changes and/or bond issues is not responsible, representative government After all that, my feeling is that the Parks Authority needs to step back and draw up a more reasoned approach to the future of Franconia Park. Inviting neighborhood residents to participate in the development of the plan, visiting the current facility during high

Speaker Number **12**

Group/Organization: **Springfield Forest CA**

* Speaking as an individual and I support the position of the community. The Springfield Forest CA will support anything that the community does wants done.

Speaker Number **13**

Group/Organization:

* Family been here since 1987. You've got so much in the MP that people will not be able to enjoy the park, people will be crawling all over each other. You want more parks fine, go down by CVS at Manchester Lakes, there is a soccer field there, put lights on it and I guarantee it won't bother anyone, it is a commercial area. You've got Hooes Road Park, put lights there, it has easy access not going through neighborhoods. My children grew up here and could play in the park, walk in the woods and play on the field, have pickup games but they

can't now. Kids can't play there because it is all tied up. During the summer when there are games going on, there are cars coming in and out. Putting in a double amount of traffic all coming into the same places they are coming in now is a bad idea. You should go somewhere other than the middle of a neighborhood.

Speaker Number **14**

Group/Organization:

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It is increasingly difficult and dangerous to enter and exit our driveways. All too often many patrons of the park do not adhere to the posted 25 mph speed limit signs. Designing the park for increased usage will heighten the safety risks to the citizens of my community. The property values for those that border the park and live along the main travel routes in and out of the park may see assessment increase and taxes increase as a result of the proposed development. In reality, we will find that we will get less for our houses at selling time due to increased lighting, nighttime noise & increased traffic with hundreds of extra cars in and out of the community on the weekend. Park Authority is not able to property manage and maintain Franconia District Park in it's current state. The park, as large as it is, usually only has 3 port-a-jons at any time. They are located in the far corner of the Bowie Dr. parking lot. This is on the far west side of the park away from the highly used synthetic field. With several SUV's and mini-vans in the Bowie lot, those jons can't be seen. This means that many users of the park use the woods and nearby bushes to relieve themselves. Many times I have seen the trash cans overflowing on Sunday mornings. The results are that there is no room for trash generated by Sunday Activities. It gets thrown on the ground. Since the change over to DST in early March, the lights for the synthetic field have been on till 12:30pm. No one has come out to adjust them. This should be standard procedure. No one should have to call and complain about it. Many nights for hours at a time, the lights are on with no one using the field. This is because anyone can turn on the light. The handicap parking in the cloud lot is situated in the farthest corner from the only paved pathway that leads to areas of the park. There are no jons in this area of the park. Other items of interest are: 1) Cars speeding to and from the park. 2) 12 cars lined up at Thomas & Meriweather heading out of the neighborhood on a weekend. 3) Cars running the estop signs at Bowie and Thomas and Cloud & Meriweather, coming and going to the park. 4) People using the park as a toilet. 5) Overflowing trash cans. 6) Alcohol being consumed. 7) Broken glass in parking lots and paved pathways. 8) Yelling, cursing, swearing, cheering and whistle blowing as late as 11:00 pm. 9) No parking signs placed in the pathway of the gate arms at Cloud Dr. preventing their use. 10) Lights being turned on later at night some time after sun has already set.

I do not want to see anymore traffic and late night usage to take place at the park. However being a realist I know that FCPA is going to do something more with the park. Therefore I submit some ideas for consideration. 1) a one hundred ft. buffer zone from residential property lines into the park. This is to be put in writing. Plants and trees need to be planted in this area were need. 2) 11pm is too late for the park to be open causing noise, traffic and safety concerns for the residents of the surrounding neighborhood. Park needs to close sooner. 3) The proposed overlook area is taken off the planning map. This encroaches too close to the houses in that corner of the park. 4) The parking at Bowie needs to be reduced by 1/3 and can not be inclined (if it is). Car headlights will shine directly into the bedroom windows of residents. 5) There is room for about 20 parking spaces to be made in the area of the softball field. 6) Port-a-jons need to be placed at the Cloud entrance parking lot. 7) Posts need to be placed next to Jons so that they can be secured in an upright position and can't be tipped over. 8) Handicap parking in Cloud parking needs to be moved next to the path that goes into the park. 9) Trash needs to be better monitored. Number of cans & pickups need to be adequate. 10) Cloud parking lot needs cans in parking area. 11) The future garden plots along the synthetic field can be reduced, making way for more parking and easier access to North-east corner of park. 12) The last garden plots to parking can be put in treed area near existing gardens. 13) The trees to be planted around and in-between fields need to go in ASAP. It will take years for them to grow. 14) Money generated by the gardens & field permits needs to go back into the maintenance of the park.

FCPA should not be trying to turn the park into a major sporting complex. The park is buried over half a mile into a 50 yr. old neighborhood with roadways that were never designed to handle the traffic volume that the

Speaker Number **15**

Group/Organization:

* Live abutting the park. The sledding hill is in my back yard. If the parking is increased, I could see a kid sliding right into and under a car. The parking lot extended to the buffer. There are trees that are there that create a buffer from all the noise. They are going to have to cut into the hill which will change the waterflow from that hill. There is a weeping willow with a marsh...what is going to happen with that. There is a gutter or trough for the water to run off, the parking lot is going to go into that. Don't object to kids playing soccer or baseball. Lived here since 1964, changes in the park make kids unable to play there. It is too dangerous for kids to go to the park by themselves. Saw kids skateboarding to park, saw a car leaving the park went through all four gears from the park up Thomas. Noise caused windows to rattle from a boombox, there was a tent with coolers in the park.

Speaker Number **16**

Group/Organization:

* Do not want this kind of park in our community. The radius for this park is 3-6 miles, which is this community, this park is for us. Secondly, where is the demand signal for this? When did we come up and say we want all this for the park? Grew up in this neighborhood, safety issues where police had to close park to make sure there was not any drug activity going on. We are not maintaining the park the way it should be, there are potholes and we are talking about expanding. Where's the funding to handle this new kind of plan? There are enough soccer fields in this area. There are a lot of parks that can take on this kind of responsibility without infringing on this neighborhood park and that is exactly what this is.

Speaker Number **17**

Group/Organization: **Franconia Museum**

* Park has a lot of history to it, there should be some recognition of that. Would like to see Civil War trails. I was on Park Authority board, represented Lee District and now am the president of the Rose Hill Civic Association. Lee District Park is one of the treasures, there is also Greendale Golf Course and Huntley Meadows Park. See lots of people bringing kids to ballgames but don't see the beer drinkers and all the problems that you talk about. I would suggest that you work with the Park Authority to come up with a better use for the property. Neighborhood watch can call the Park Authority to have lights turned off at 10pm. You can't get to Lee District Park without going down neighborhood streets just like this park.

The Franconia Museum would be pleased to assist in the placing of a historic marker that would note the history of the park and its environs - Franconia railroad station, an airport, army anti-aircraft site during the Cold War and the source of gravel for the construction and subsequent widening of the Capital Beltway.

Speaker Number **18**

Group/Organization:

* Neighbor for 11 years. Have 6 year old. There are a lot of kids in neighborhood. Not comfortable with the safety of the kids with all the traffic that is currently here on Saturday and Sunday. To quadruple that amount is a catastrophe. Can't bring child to park and have him play soccer because there are too many games going on, it's just not safe. Gentleman who says we are not cooperating with the park in turning off the lights that's just is not fair, there is a lot of trash all the time, not enough facilities. The lighted field is lit up like a christmas tree. The infrastructure is not there, no additional port a potties, there's not additional trash cans, there is no stopping to make sure things are in order, you left it to the neighborhood, that's not fair. Now you want to build additional fields, a dog park and things back in the corner. We want a neighborhood park where we can feel

Speaker Number **19**

Group/Organization:

* Main issue is the safety issue. Like to go out and walk and ride bike. Don't feel comfortable in the park. With more facilities it will need a full time plus employee to watch it especially on the weekends. The trash needs to be picked up on a regular basis-daily. This park is isolated, not on a main drag. This park is too easy for people to disappear in. It is not on a police route, they have to make a special run down Thomas just to check on it. There are a lot of safety issues. The property values will go down because the dirt, noise and traffic will skyrocket. Never heard of the meeting when this all started.

Speaker Number **20**

Group/Organization:

- * Residents of Monticello Woods for 31 years. Park Authority does an excellent job, don't think Franconia Park is the place to expand. Coached baseball and softball in Fairfax County for 15 years. There is no buffer in Franconia Park. Most parks have acres of trees, all activities stay in the park, this isn't the case in Franconia. This was not built as a District park, it is a neighborhood park.

Speaker Number **21**

Group/Organization:

- * Opposed to changes. Live on Northanna. Cars park in my driveway and on the street blocking driveways and hydrants. Disrespectful to neighbors. We have to live in neighborhood and put up with whatever comes. Light from current field shines in my bedroom. The lights are high up. I did not hear about the July 2013 meeting.

Speaker Number **22**

Group/Organization:

- * Live on Thomas Drive. Have two kids. Safety is a huge issue but son plays soccer, club can't play in this park because other clubs have priority. They should be able to play in their own neighborhood. The bigger clubs get the permits for the other fields nearby. Desperately need more lighted turf fields, but the infrastructure is a huge problem. Being in a neighborhood makes it challenging. People don't come and nobody monitors, building the fields is wonderful but the infrastructure needs to be there to support it. Need somebody present to make sure gates are locked, no alcohol is going on and that it is monitored and safe for the neighborhood kids to use.

Speaker Number **23**

Group/Organization:

- * Like that there is spontaneous recreation at this park. Frisbees and kite flying that probably can't be done if the parking lot is expanded. Parks like Lee District, Ossian Hall can't compare because they are not in the neighborhood. Have had cars totalled along the streets that may not have anything to do with the park but expanding the use will make the chances of that happening more. Would like to have neighborhood kids be able to play in the park but wondered if since there are already permits issued would the neighborhood clubs have better opportunity to get one with these improvements.

Speaker Number **24**

Group/Organization:

- * Was inclined to support increased field play and increased lights but after going up to the park decided that the houses are very close and it would illuminate their yards. Now I don't support any additional lighted play, there is no buffer between the houses and the lights. As to the comparison to Lee District, Fairfax County Park description of a District park is that it has to be accessible by a major road. Lee District park is accessible by Telegraph Rd, to get to Franconia Park you have to go down the neighborhood streets.

Speaker Number **comment note** Group/Organization:

- * Not kept up now - not enough trash cans now. Concern for the children in our neighborhoods. They speed now and ignore the stop sign @ Bowie & Thomas.
- * This is too large for our neighborhood - Redraw this plan. Where is the money coming from? What is the time frame? Please ensure that restroom facilities are included.
- * Concerned about lowering our property values after they have just raised the values of our homes.
- * Traffic is too much and too fast, w/o minding traffic rules. The 1964 neighborhood is experiencing a return of young families with multiple children. Rules for the soccer fields leaves them nowhere safe to play and experience nature. The trash, strangers, noise and lights as well as so many parking on Thomas, Bowie and Northanna creates an unpleasant feel and decreases my home's value now, what will the increase in soccer fields bring? We have some lovely wildlife; foxes, deer, hawks, birds of all kinds, gray and black squirrels, etc. Where are they in this plan? The "Resource Protection Zone" does not cover near enough for these poor animals.