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12-15-12

October 10, 2012

Ms. Judy Guse-Noritake
Chair
Park and Recreation Commission

Dear Judy:

The Youth Sports Advisory Board fully supports the proposed plans for the new Jefferson-Houston School. The sports and recreation features associated with the project strongly indicate a commitment to maximizing the resources to the greatest good for our children.

We totally support the installation of an artificial turf field at the school site, the new outdoor basketball court with lights, a full size gym with an indoor basketball court, and a new playground. The lack of open space remaining in the City makes it a necessity that we maximize use of whatever space is available. The above actions precisely do that. While we understand that we may lose some use of the recreation facilities during the school construction, the added benefit of new and better features will more than offset that temporary sacrifice.

The full size gym will be a great asset and benefit to the school and the City. Even so, it may not satisfy the demand the proposed school population will generate. Any and all means should be made to add even more indoor exercise room where possible.

We look forward to the completion of this new facility and adjourning recreation areas. Please let me know if the Youth Sports Advisory Board can further support this effort.

Sincerely,

Jim Gibson

Jim Gibson, Chair

Youth Sports Advisory Board



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James B. Spengler
Director

DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION, PARKS
AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES
1108 Jefferson Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314-3999

Phone (703) 746-4343
Fax (703) 838-6344

Park and Recreation Commission

December 10, 2012

The Honorable William Euille
Vice Mayor Kerry Donley
Councilman Frank H. Fannon IV
Councilwoman Alicia Hughes
Councilwoman Redella S. "Del" Pepper
Councilman Paul Smedberg
Councilman David Speck

Re: Jefferson Houston School

Dear Mayor and Council Members:

I am writing on behalf of the Park and Recreation Commission (P&RC) regarding the plan for the new Jefferson Houston School which you will consider shortly. The P&RC has had a number of briefings on this proposed new school and one of our commissioners has served on the planning group.

As you know, our primary concern is to assure that this facility, as well as any new school facility, addresses the needs of recreation for the children that attend and also the community at large. Owing to both limited land and financial resources these new schools must address the broad community recreational needs, becoming "centers" of community for all citizens.

Our commission feels that the planning and design of the proposed Jefferson Houston addresses the community recreational needs in a commendable manner. While fitting the school program on the site along with a full sized athletic field was a challenge, it has been done successfully. The athletic field, along with playgrounds, an outdoor basketball court with lights and a full-sized gymnasium will be a tremendous asset to the community in the eastern part of our City.

While the loss of the field during the construction phase will be felt by the community at large, what will be achieved when the project is complete will be of great help in addressing the shortfall of recreational facilities in the City.

The Park & Recreation Commission wishes to thank the ACPS School Board, the ACPS Planning Staff, the Planning and Zoning staff, along with the planners from the Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Affairs for the professional collaboration that produced this plan, creatively addressing so many needs on such a constrained site. This is the model of collaborative planning that needs to be employed as our City moves forward to plan for new schools yet to be designed, but which are eminent.

The Park and Recreation Commission fully and enthusiastically endorses the plan before you for the new Jefferson Houston School. Also attached is a letter of endorsement from the Youth Sports Advisory Board, a subcommittee of our commission focused on our children's sports and recreational needs.

Regards:

Judy R. Guse-Noritake, Chair
Park and Recreation Commission

Cc: Park and Recreation Commissioners
Rashad Young, City Manager
Sheryl Gorsuch, Chair, Alexandria School Board
Faroll Hamer, Director P&Z
James Spengler, Director, RPCA
James Gibson, Chair, Youth Sports

Peter Pennington

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City Council Public Hearing - Saturday, December 15, 2012
DSUP12-11, Master Plan Amendment # 2012-0008
Development Special Use Permit # 2012-0011

1501 Cameron Street (additional addresses include 1605 and 1609 Cameron Street)
Jefferson Houston School

Good morning Mayor and Council Members. My name is Bea Porter, I reside at 1727 Cameron Street. I have written you many times in regards to the proposed project for Jefferson-Houston Elementary School.

My concerns with this project have to do with moving the Buchanan Street Park and the basketball court from their current locations. I have read the request from the developer and attended all the community meetings. One plan that had been proposed left the park and basketball court where they are, and wrapped the driveway/drop off for the school around the Durant Center. Several years ago there was a plan to renovate the park but that was placed on hold due to the upcoming new school building. To renovate the park and basketball court where they are would be a cost savings for this project. Keeping these items in place is a safe place for them. This park was built many years ago separate from the school so families that have younger children can use these during school hours without worry of the bigger children interfering with the smaller ones. There is a nice park behind the basketball court which is used by many people.

I met with Captain Bartlett and Officer Lloyd to discuss the safety issues with keeping the park where it is and with moving it to behind the Durant Center. I conducted my own surveillance of both sites. The view from Cameron Street is and will be limited by the Durant Center building. The current location of the park can be seen from Cameron Street, but the best part is that where it sits, the neighbors can view the children 24/7 from 3 sides of the block. We have a neighborhood watch group, we take care of each other's children. To move this park and court using cameras to keep watch on this area is not good enough. The police cruisers are not there 24/7, the cameras are not people, when someone falls or gets hurt, we want someone to be able to help as quickly as possible. The police are looking for bad guys, they are looking for trouble, they are not looking for that broken child. We the neighbors of this park, we are the ones that are here. Moving these two areas would put them out of view from most of the block.

To open the parking lot and put the driveway around the swimming pool would put individuals at risk from moving vehicular traffic 24/7, as the drive would be one way and continuously used 24/7. I want to see more parking behind the Durant Center, which would allow the teachers closer parking to the school, which would allow more parking for the new field, more parking during City events. I recently re-submitted my petition, which now carries almost 300 signatures from people that want to keep the park and basketball court where they are, this has been added to the SUP that you have.

I ask that you consider what I am saying very seriously, once these changes are made, they will be in place for a very, very, long time. Thank you.

K. Scott Brown Prepared comments supporting
111 HARVARD ST. SUP for J-H School, DSUP12-H
CITY COUNSEL HEARING, DEC 15, 2012

- Role as a Key communicator drumming up interest and input in the design/project
 - Email Listserv, flyers, meeting summaries
 - Encourage input on/constructive feedback (site layout and design)
 - Attended every meeting, emailed meeting highlights
- J-H project transparent community driven process
 - Site layout and design based on community input & concerns
 - Many meetings, voting via handhelds
- Site layout
 - Site layout was selected by the community based on key criteria.
 - Key criteria developed by community participants at a prior workshop styled meeting.
 - e.g. internal kiss-N-ride, no cut thrus, keep existing bld
 - Site Layout(s) modified based on community concerns
 - Kiss-N-Ride: internal, prevent informal, and good traffic circulation
 - Participants heard many comments pro /con on the various site layouts by other participants.
 - Solid consensus for the final site layout.
 - Layout is like a rubics cube, i.e., make one change and you have three new issues.
- Exterior Design (same process as site layout)
 - Various contemporary designs not based on/compatible with PG historic styles.
 - "visually intrusive" (PG Hist. Dist. Survey)
 - Feedback by architecture community, staff, etc. incorporated in latest design
 - Art Deco/Streamline (or Art) Modern
 - Compatible with surrounding
 - Shines the light on an overlooked style lost in a sea of Victorian architecture.
 - Observatory Iconic symbol of the school (Prince Hall)
 - Elegant/Award Winning
- Mass, Scale, Size
 - Appropriate for "city" setting.
 - Public school should prominent building.
 - Historically, J-H was on West Street, nothing new
 - Higher structure (2 stories along West) was approved by community.
 - Queen Street terminus structure appropriate. Most of height opposite queen street terminus, not residential houses.
 - Other large building adjacent to homes nearby.

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- Product of the Community
 - Not selected by any one individual,
 - But by the community as a whole. (parents, staff, etc)

- Please approve
 - With funds necessary to complete as designed
 - Observatory, brick work, etc. (80 yr)
 - Good schools require good facilities.

Jackie Henderson

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From: Linda Hafer <lindabhafer@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, December 14, 2012 6:03 PM
To: William Euille; Frank Fannon; Kerry Donley; Alicia Hughes; Del Pepper; Paul Smedberg; David Speck; Jackie Henderson; Tony Castrilli; Craig Fifer; JoAnn Maldonado; Elaine Scott
Subject: COA Contact Us: Union St Corridor Study
Attachments: ATT00001.txt

COA Contact Us: Mayor, Vice Mayor, and Council Members

Time: [Fri Dec 14, 2012 18:02:45] Message ID: [44251]

Issue Type: Mayor, Vice Mayor, and Council Members

First Name: Linda

Last Name: Hafer

Street Address: 9218 Rockefeller Ln

City: Springfield

State: VA

Zip: 22153-1101

Phone: 703-644-0958

Email Address: lindabhafer@gmail.com

Subject: Union St Corridor Study

Dear Mayor Euille and Members of Council,

As you consider the Union

Street Corridor Study, I urge you to support the recommendations put

forward by the Waterfront Commission and the Planning Commission. During

my service as a member of the Waterfront Commission, I was impressed by the

serious, thoughtful, and thorough consideration invested in exploring the

Comments: issues and their various possible solutions. I believe the specific

recommendations, and the time frames attached to them, provide an

actionable template for moving forward in a positive way toward improving

problematic elements along the Union St. corridor.

Having worked in

the Torpedo Factory since 1988, I can also speak as a veteran navigator of

the complicated pedestrian/bicyclist/motorist King
& Union

intersection. Help is needed!

What a wonderful opportunity you have to

exercise your leadership role to improve the
experience of Old Town for

residents and visitors alike! Thank you for all that
you do for this

unique and charming city!

Sincerely yours,
Linda Brinker Hafer

Jackie Henderson

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From: BILL CAMPBELL <CAMPBELW1@VERIZON.NET>
Sent: Friday, December 14, 2012 11:25 PM
To: William Euille; Frank Fannon; Kerry Donley; Alicia Hughes; Del Pepper; Paul Smedberg; David Speck; Jackie Henderson; Tony Castrilli; Craig Fifer; JoAnn Maldonado; Elaine Scott
Subject: COA Contact Us: APPROVAL OF JEFFERSON-hOUSTON CONSTRUCTION
Attachments: ATT00001.txt

COA Contact Us: Mayor, Vice Mayor, and Council Members

Time: [Fri Dec 14, 2012 23:25:05] **Message ID:** [44252]

Issue Type: Mayor, Vice Mayor, and Council Members

First Name: BILL

Last Name: CAMPBELL

Street Address: 320 N. FAYETTE STREET

City: ALEXANDRIA

State: VA

Zip: 22314-2435

Phone: 703-836-2310

Email Address: CAMPBELW1@VERIZON.NET

Subject: APPROVAL OF JEFFERSON-hOUSTON
CONSTRUCTION

Mayor Euille and Council members,

I hope to speak to you in person at

Saturday's Council meeting but on the chance
that I am unable to make the

session, I wanted to provide this letter seeking
your support to continue

moving forward with the construction of a new
school facility on the

Jefferson-Houston Elementary site.

Comments: Our boys began kindergarten at

Jefferson-Houston seven years ago. For several
years as the PTA President

and a parent, I've pressed for improvements in all
areas of the schooling

to include the facility. We still have a ways to go
securing quality,

consistent leadership; teachers and programming
which will establish a

solid foundation for sustained educational
achievement. However, the need

for a new facility has long been an unquestionable fact.

As more and

more folks came around to acknowledging this need, ACPs began a community

dialogue and outreach that has been phenomenal. Countless interactive

sessions have been held. The events have been rotated to different

facilities in the school district to allow for increased participation,

especially from those that have been historically under-served and

under-involved. Technology has been used at the sessions to gauge and

document the audience's desires. Small charrette formats have also been

used to solicit community input. While not every single person has been

satisfied with every single aspect of the emerging design, the community

truly has been intimately involved and they have directly and positively

affected the design.

Some continue to question the size and capacity of

the planned building. If TC Williams and Tucker Elementary are any

indicators, it is certainly prudent to build in capacity. Also, more than

350 children currently attend the school and over 600 kids currently live

in the Jefferson-Houston school zone. City and School projections both

show continued growth in this district including significant contributions

from developments in Potomac Yards.

As a community member who's home is

three blocks away from Jefferson-Houston, I think that the emerging design

of the facility is one that most in the community and the city can be proud

of. As a newly-elected member of the Alexandria City School Board, I will

continue to work tirelessly toward ensuring that
when this fabulous

facility opens, it will have strong leadership and
quality programming that

will have all Parker-Gray Historic Area families
excited to enroll their

children in their community school.

Again, this letter seeks your

approval to allow the design and construction of
the new Jefferson-Houston

facility to move forward. Sincere and heartfelt
thanks to you all for your

continued support of the children in our great city.

Sincerely,

Bill Campbell
320 N. Fayette Street

Jackie Henderson

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From: Kelly Dresen <kelly.dresen@verizon.net>
Sent: Friday, December 14, 2012 11:34 PM
To: William Euille; Frank Fannon; Kerry Donley; Alicia Hughes; Del Pepper; Paul Smedberg; David Speck; Jackie Henderson; Tony Castrilli; Craig Fifer; JoAnn Maldonado; Elaine Scott
Subject: COA Contact Us: Support Jefferson-Houston School Project
Attachments: ATT00001.txt

COA Contact Us: Mayor, Vice Mayor, and Council Members

Time: [Fri Dec 14, 2012 23:34:00] **Message ID:** [44253]

Issue Type: Mayor, Vice Mayor, and Council Members

First Name: Kelly

Last Name: Dresen

Street Address: 501 E. Luray Avenue

City: Alexandria

State: VA

Zip: 22301

Phone: 703 307 3040

Email Address: kelly.dresen@verizon.net

Subject: Support Jefferson-Houston School Project
Please support Jefferson-Houston Pre-K School
by approving the design plans

on your agenda for December 15.

Parents, teachers, students, and the

neighborhood community have been involved in
this planning process for over

a year. This has generated a set of design plans
that meets the

educational specifications of our building and
also respects the character

Comments: of our neighborhood.

It is crucial that this process be approved on

Saturday so that we may maintain the timeline for
construction and have

this building open for the 2014-2015 school year.
Our outdated building

cannot properly accommodate even our relatively
small population, let alone

the projected student population growth over the
next several years.

The

costs of maintaining our current building are disproportionately high. A

new, energy-efficient building will be a hallmark for smart

design.

There are dozens of other reasons for you to approve this

building plan. One reason we tend not to discuss too loudly is safety.

The current Jefferson-Houston building has very few walls, and no classroom

doors. My children have noted that it is, "The best building to sneak

around." I have every confidence that our administrative team has the best

possible emergency plan in place for our children. But given today's

reminder that horrible things can and do happen in schools, it is your

responsibility, as the governing body of this city, to ensure that the 350

students who attend Jefferson-Houston PreK-8 can attend school in a

building that meets basic safety standards.

I hope that I will be able

to attend the City Council session on Saturday. I am writing to you because

family obligations will probably prevent this. As the PTA president for

J-H, I want to assure you that there is significant parent support for this

building design, and for our new building. That may not be reflected in

the audience at Saturday's meeting; but that will simply be a result of

timing during the holidays. It may also be a result of meeting fatigue.

The following is a partial list of meetings in which parent involvement was

encouraged or expected, since the first day of school:

September 10:

Building Meeting
September 10: PTA Meeting

September 20: Back to School

Night

September 24: Meeting re: Extended Day

September 25: Meeting re:

Extended Day

October 9: PTA Meeting

October 24: Board of Architectural

Review Meeting

November 12-14: Parent-Teacher Conferences

November 12:

Building Meeting

November 13: PTA Meeting

November 26: Community

Engagement Committee meeting

November 29: Accreditation/Corrective Action

Plan Meeting

December 4: Planning Commission Meeting

December 6:

Meeting re: accreditation status

December 6: School Board to approve

corrective action plan

December 11: PTA Meeting

December 12: PTA

leadership meeting the Superintendent re: budget

December 13: Parents meet

with IB Authorization Team

Thank you for your consideration and for your

support of this important project.

Kelly Jones Dresen

PTA President,

Jefferson-Houston PreK-8 School

Jackie Henderson

From: website <webmaster@alexandriava.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, December 12, 2012 2:26 PM
To: Jackie Henderson; Gloria Sitton
Subject: City Council speaker's form submission received

Meeting Date: 12/15/2012
Docket Item# 8

Speaker's Name: Mark Eisenhower
Phone #: 703-965-3418
Email:
Address: 2000 N. Beauregard

Representing self? No
If representing other: Alexandria City Public Schools

Position on the item: For

Nature of interest: Civic Interest

Are you being compensated? Yes

Jackie Henderson

From: website <webmaster@alexandriava.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, December 12, 2012 2:21 PM
To: Jackie Henderson; Gloria Sitton
Subject: City Council speaker's form submission received

Meeting Date: 12/15/2012
Docket Item# 8

Speaker's Name: Duncan Blair
Phone #: 703-836-1000
Email:
Address: 524 King Street

Representing self? No
If representing other: Alexandria City Public Schools

Position on the item: For

Nature of interest: attorney

Are you being compensated? Yes