

[REDACTED]
Arlington, Virginia 22201

June 7, 2017

Joint Facilities Advisory Committee
Arlington County
2100 Arlington Blvd.
Arlington, VA 22201

Re: Request for comments on Buck and Carlin Springs scenarios

Ladies and gentlemen:

The Joint Facilities Advisory Committee has requested comments on five scenarios JFAC is exploring for use of the Buck property and the 601 S. Carlin Springs Road property. I am writing to express my wife's and my preference for Scenarios C and E, our opposition to Scenarios A, B, and D, and our opposition to a land swap that would increase the height of a self-storage building on the Buck property.

My wife and I live on [REDACTED] about 70 yards from the eastern boundary of the Buck property. We have lived here since 1990. Our neighborhood is entirely residential. Scenarios A, B, and D – which we oppose – would significantly degrade the residential character of the neighborhood. Even Scenarios C and E would adversely affect the neighborhood. However, Scenarios C and E are the least objectionable of the five existing choices, and we recognize that every part of Arlington must bear its fair share of development.

My wife and I have attended County and JFAC meetings, and we viewed the materials that JFAC displayed in the lobby of the County building on May 30. As a result, we are generally aware of the considerations JFAC is weighing – including the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and constraints of the five scenarios – and this letter will not repeat issues that JFAC is already weighing. Instead, this letter emphasizes additional considerations. As JFAC evaluates the five scenarios, we ask that JFAC bear in mind the following:

- While every part of Arlington must bear its fair share of development, our neighborhood – the area bounded by Kirkwood St. (to the east), Washington Blvd. (to the south), Quincy St. (to the west), and I-66 (to the north) – is currently being asked to bear more than its fair share. Arlington County is currently considering proposals to revise the general land use plan (“GLUP”) for the southeastern portion of our neighborhood, including the YMCA and American Legion sites. All of the proposed revisions to the GLUP would significantly impair the residential character of our neighborhood by increasing building heights, density, and traffic. When considering potential uses for the Buck property, JFAC should bear in mind the other proposed changes to our neighborhood and should not ask our neighborhood to bear more than its fair share.

- Traffic on Quincy Street between I-66 and Washington Boulevard is already heavy. My wife and I regularly try to cross Quincy Street to reach Washington and Lee High School. Crossing Quincy Street is already a challenge, and we often see buses waiting to enter and exit W&L. Notwithstanding the existing traffic, the Arlington County School Board is actively considering adding an additional 500-600 students at the “Education Center” site, which is adjacent to W&L. The Buck property has only one point of ingress and egress. Adding additional traffic to the Buck property will further burden Quincy Street. In view of the existing and projected traffic on Quincy Street, any decision on the use of the Buck property should minimize additional traffic on Quincy Street.
- Very young children play in Hayes Park. Because Scenarios A, B, and D increase the industrial use of the Buck property, including by increasing particulate emissions in the vicinity of the park, these scenarios have the greatest potential to adversely affect the children that congregate in Hayes Park.
- The current zoning of the Buck property is an accident of history, the origins of which are far beyond the scope of this letter. If the Buck property had been zoned appropriately, it would be an ideal place for additional housing, because it is close to Metro, schools, parks, and libraries. If JFAC has any appetite for exploring additional scenarios, we ask JFAC to consider a solution in which (1) a developer would acquire property elsewhere in the County for industrial use, (2) that property would be swapped for the Buck property, (3) the developer would build residential units on the Buck property, and (4) the County would use the newly acquired property for its priorities.
- Different scenarios contemplate a path along the south border of the Buck property. We see little value in that path. (If the goal is to facilitate access to the Buck property, JFAC should be aware that parking on 14th, Lincoln, Monroe, and Nelson streets is already limited; it would not be helpful to encourage additional parking on these streets, and any development of the Buck property should be limited so that it includes sufficient parking for the intended uses. If the goal is to facilitate east-west travel between Lincoln and Quincy streets, the existing sidewalk along 14th Street is adequate. In either case, our neighbors will not be enthusiastic about pedestrian traffic in their back yards.) Instead of a pedestrian path, it would be better to increase the density of the buffer between the Buck property and its neighbors.

Thank you for including these considerations in your deliberations.

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Michael [REDACTED]