

January 22, 2017

TO: Prince William County Board of County Supervisors, School Board and Planning Commission. (emailed to each member on 1/22/2017)

SUBJECT: Report of school-related information – not previously provided – for proposed Mia’s Meadow (#REZ2016-00015), agenda item for BOCS Public Hearing on 1/24/2017.

FROM: Doug Widener, Citizens Alliance of Prince William (“*Putting Children and Families First*”)

1. Purpose of this report:

- a. To provide *additional information about the negative impact* of the proposed Mia’s Meadow rezoning/new home development on the schools affected and potentially affected. That information is in paragraphs 7 through 9 of this report.
- b. This important additional information was *not* included in the “proposed development review report” submitted by Prince William County Public Schools (PWCS) to the Planning Office. That PWCS report was the basis for the “Schools Plan Analysis” in the Staff Report from the Planning Office. The Planning Commission and Board of County Supervisors rely on the Staff Report from the Planning Office for school-related information prior to voting to approve proposed rezoning/new home developments.

2. Major problems common to all PWCS “proposed development review reports”:

- a. They do not identify/quantify *current problems with classroom overcrowding* (i.e., pupil to teacher ratio) at the schools affected or potentially affected by the proposed project.
- b. They do not identify/quantify the *many new homes already under development in the area* served by the schools affected or potentially affected.
- c. They are *egregiously misleading* with regard to –
 - 1) The projected date when new schools and classroom additions are expected to be available to relieve current overcrowding and prevent future overcrowding.
 - 2) Developer “proffers” (which, generally, don’t effectively mitigate the costs to educate the additional students from proposed developments).

3. Negative consequences of inadequate/misleading PWCS “proposed development review reports”:

- a. County Supervisors may be unaware they are approving proposed projects that either cause or worsen overcrowding at the schools affected or potentially affected.
- b. Supervisors who are not fully aware –in advance – of the negative impact of their votes are *not likely to be held accountable* for those votes.

4. Questions raised by inadequate/misleading PWCS reports:

- a. What are the influences – if any – that cause PWCS to issue such reports?
- b. What do such reports indicate about PWCS advocacy for students, parents and teachers?
- c. What PWCS/Board of County Supervisors/Planning Commission/Planning Office/School

Board action will be taken to correct this problem?

5. **Purpose of Citizens Alliance of Prince William:**

- a. **Ensure Supervisor awareness of school-related problems** – Each Supervisor will receive a significantly improved “proposed development review report” *before* the public hearing and vote on each rezoning/new home development.
- b. **Grade Supervisors’ school-related votes** – Once Supervisors are made fully aware of the negative impact – if any – their vote to approve a project would likely have on overcrowding the schools affected or potentially affected, “grade” them on that vote (i.e., “pass” or “fail”, depending on whether or not their vote will likely cause or worsen overcrowding) and record their “grade” on a “report card” developed by Citizens Alliance for that purpose.
- c. **Ensure citizen awareness that each Supervisor has county-wide responsibilities** – Each Supervisor represents the *entire* county, not just their own Magisterial District. Supervisor votes that cause or worsen school overcrowding in *any* District have a negative impact – *countywide* – on shared school resources, real estate taxes paid by all county homeowners, etc.
- d. **Hold Supervisors accountable for school-related votes** – Provide county voters with the Supervisors’ “report card” for school overcrowding, as well as other pertinent information. Voters will then have the *facts* needed to hold Supervisors who help cause or worsen school overcrowding *accountable* at the polls.
- e. **Promote transparency in government operations** – And ensure detailed information about county policies and procedures is not reduced or eliminated to the detriment of county activists and the news media. The Planning Office has begun considering a “reorganization” of the county’s Comprehensive Plan that would *reduce it from 400 to 500 pages down to 50 or 60 pages*. As county government officials are aware, Citizens Alliance of Prince William heavily relied on information in the Comprehensive Plan (and information available at the PWCS website) to develop its ambitious plan to help fix the county’s school and tax problems, prevent more suburban sprawl and recruit quality employers to the county.
- f. **Promote “Smart Growth” in new home development** – Limit new home development to areas of the county where infrastructure (e.g., schools, roads, public transportation, etc.) is adequate to support such growth without further burdening county taxpayers.

6. **Information provided by PWCS in its “proposed development review report” for Mia’s Meadow:**

- a. **Rezoning/development requested** – Rezone approximately 19.8 acres from Agricultural (A-1) to Planned Mixed Residential (PMR) to allow for the construction of up to 45 single family units.
- b. **Location** – The subject property currently contains two single-family dwellings and is located at the southeastern intersection of Minnieville Road and Spriggs Road.
- c. **Projected number of students** – Based on 2015-16 county-wide student generation factors, the 45 proposed housing units are projected to generate a total of 29 students (i.e., 13 elementary, 7 middle and 9 high school). School-by-school student generation rates can vary by plus or minus 50% in a specific development.
- d. **Schools Affected** – In view of the residential development currently taking place within

the county and the resulting overcrowding of a number of schools, school assignments and boundaries are subject to change. However, under the School Division's 2015-16 districting, students living in this general area will attend the following schools –

- Montclair Elementary School
- Saunders Middle School
- Hylton High School

e. **Other Schools Potentially Affected** (in the Ferlazzo Capital Improvements Program Geographic Area):

- Ashland Elementary School
- Coles Elementary School
- Enterprise Elementary School
- King Elementary School
- McAuliffe Elementary School
- Parks Elementary School
- Wilson Elementary School

7. **Impact of the proposed Mia's Meadow on area schools (includes new information developed by Citizens Alliance of Prince William):**

a. **Student enrollment vs. school capacity –**

- 1) Capacity currently exists at Montclair Elementary to absorb the new students.
- 2) Saunders Middle is currently operating at 95.6 percent of its student capacity. The Schools Division projects it to be over capacity by 2020-21.
- 3) Hylton High is currently operating at *111.9 percent* of its student capacity. Enrollment there grew faster this year than the School Division projected, even after Colgan High opened this school year. The School Division's projection that Hylton will be operating at only 88.1 percent of its capacity by 2020-21 appears invalid, since the 14th high school is not scheduled to open until at least 2023. See Table 5 and Item 7.d. below for more details.
- 4) See data in Tables 1 and 2.

b. **New homes under development in the area –**

- 1) 50 new homes are already under development in the area served by *Montclair Elementary*. Other elementary schools potentially affected have an average of 114 new homes under development in their attendance area.
- 2) 185 new homes are already under development in the area served by Saunders Middle.
- 3) 158 new homes are under development in the area served by Hylton High.
- 4) See data in Table 3.

c. **Average class size –**

- 1) Average class size at Montclair Elementary *exceeds* state standards for *maximum* number of students in Kindergarten and Grades 1, 2, 3 and 5. Average class size for the six elementary schools potentially affected by this development (data was not available online for Wilson) *exceeds* state standards in 10 of the 36 Kindergarten/Grades and is *at* the maximum in another seven Kindergarten/Grades.
- 2) Average class size at Saunders Middle significantly *exceeds* state standards for *maximum* number of students in all of the subject areas measured (i.e., English, Math,

- Science and Social Studies).
- 3) Average class size at Hylton High *exceeds* state standards for *maximum* number of students in English, Math and Social Studies.
 - 4) See data in Table 4.
- d. **Delays in planned 14th high school** – The planned 14th high school has not been funded. It was previously scheduled to open in 2021. It’s now scheduled to open in 2023, after *consecutive yearly delays* announced in the School Division’s 2016-25 and 2017-26 Approved Capital Improvements Program. There’s no reason to believe the yearly delays will not continue. See data in Table 5.
- e. **Proposed measures to mitigate school overcrowding** – The developer has offered to contribute \$20,694 to the county for each home built. This figure is in line with the Schools Policy Guide for Monetary Contributions, but it would *not* cover the costs to educate the children from this new home development –
- 1) Proffers cover only *some* of the cost to build new schools. During the period FY2017 through FY-22, the county expects 66.4 percent of its total budget for capital improvements to be spent on new schools, school renovations, etc. But less than two percent of those funds are expected to come from proffers, since “Proffers, Fire Levy, Cable Franchise Fee, Other Sources” – in total – provide only 2.1 percent of the County Funding Sources (FY17-22) for its Capital Improvements Program.
 - 2) Proffers cover *none* of the costs to operate schools (e.g., salaries, employee benefits, facility operating costs, school buses, etc.). Eighty two (82) percent (\$786.2 million) of the School Division’s FY 2016 Operating Fund will be spent on school salaries and benefits, *none* of which is covered by proffers.
 - 3) Much of the costs to build and operate schools are paid by county homeowners, through their real estate taxes.

8. Summary:

- a. Currently, there are significant problems with overcrowded schools – and classrooms, especially – in the areas affected/potentially affected by this proposed project.
- b. New homes already under development in the area, and ongoing delays in the planned opening of the 14th high school, will make current overcrowding problems worse.
- c. PWCS has already implemented two of the controversial solutions that it has considered to alleviate school overcrowding –
 - a. “Placement of portable classrooms” – A total of 13 “trailers” are already being used at the schools affected or potentially affected by this proposed development. That number may need to be increased.
 - b. “Increasing pupil/teacher ratio” – See Item 7.c. above (“Average class size”) and the data in Table 4 below.
 - c. Other methods – extremely *unpopular* with parents – PWCS has considered to alleviate overcrowding in schools are: “Boundary changes – For the opening of new schools or to shift student populations”, “Split shift” and “Year-Round Schooling”.
- d. Proffers offered by the developer would *not* come close to covering the costs to educate the children from the proposed new homes. Funding for much of those added costs

would come from real estate taxes paid by all county homeowners.

- e. **Conclusion:** Based on the *facts* in this report, approval of this project would be *inconsistent* with the PWCS stated vision of “Providing a World-Class Education” and *not* in the best interest of Prince William County citizens.

TABLE 1

Under the School Division’s 2014-2015 districting, students living in this general area will attend the following schools:

| STUDENT ENROLLMENT vs. SCHOOL CAPACITY* | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------|---------------|-----------------|------------|---------------|----------------------------|------------|---------------|
| | Available Space | | 2015-16 | | | 2016-17 | | | 2020-21 (Projected) | | |
| School | Capacity | Trailers | Students | +/- | %Util. | Students | +/- | %Util. | Students | +/- | %Util. |
| Montclair ES | 698 | 0 | 603 | 95 | 86.4% | 581 | 117 | 83.2% | 574 | 124 | 82.2% |
| Saunders MS | 1,212 | 0 | 1,159 | 53 | 95.6% | 1,159 | 53 | 95.6% | 1,215 | -3 | 100.2% |
| Hylton HS | 2,053 | 5 | 2,436 | -383 | 118.6% | 2,298 | -245 | 111.9% | 1,808 | 245 | 88.1% |

**Data Source = Student Enrollment Data: Current and Projected Enrollment - Elementary Schools/Middle Schools/High Schools - SY 2015-16 to SY 2025-26, Approved Capital Improvements Program, Fiscal Years 2017-26, Prince William County Public Schools, pages B-7 and B-9.*

Other schools potentially affected by this development:

| STUDENT ENROLLMENT vs. SCHOOL CAPACITY* | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------|---------------|-----------------|------------|---------------|----------------------------|------------|---------------|
| | Available Space | | 2015-16 | | | 2016-17 | | | 2020-21 (Projected) | | |
| School | Capacity | Trailers | Students | +/- | %Util. | Students | +/- | %Util. | Students | +/- | %Util. |
| Ashland ES | 900 | 0 | 969 | -69 | 107.7% | 800 | 100 | 88.9% | 742 | 158 | 82.4% |
| Coles ES | 472 | 3 | 507 | -35 | 107.4% | 456 | 16 | 96.6% | 429 | 43 | 90.8% |
| Enterprise ES | 520 | 2 | 484 | 36 | 93.1% | 401 | 119 | 77.1% | 456 | 64 | 87.7% |
| King ES | 520 | 2 | 509 | 11 | 97.9% | 410 | 110 | 78.8% | 465 | 55 | 89.4% |
| McAuliffe ES | 568 | 1 | 461 | 107 | 81.2% | 448 | 120 | 78.9% | 480 | 88 | 84.5% |
| Parks ES | 780 | 0 | 792 | -12 | 101.5% | 748 | 32 | 95.9% | 704 | 76 | 90.2% |
| Wilson ES | 924 | 0 | - | - | - | 640 | 284 | 69.3% | 802 | 122 | 86.8% |

**Data Source = Student Enrollment Data: Current and Projected Enrollment - Elementary Schools/Middle Schools/High Schools - SY 2015-16 to SY 2025-26, Approved Capital Improvements Program, Fiscal Years 2017-26, Prince William County Public Schools, pages B-7 and B-9.*

TABLE 2

Under the School Division’s 2014-2015 districting, students living in this general area will attend the following schools:

| ENROLLMENT GROWTH – EXPECTED vs. ACTUAL* | | | | | |
|---|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|---|-----------------|
| | | | | 2015 to 2016 Change in Official Enrollment | |
| School | 2015 Official Enrollment | 2016 Projected Enrollment | 2016 Official Enrollment | Numeric Change | % Change |
| Montclair ES | 603 | 554 | 581 | -22 | -3.6% |
| Saunders MS | 1,159 | 1,098 | 1,159 | 0 | 0% |
| Hylton HS | 2,436 | 2,088 | 2,298 | -138 | -5.7% |

*Data Source = Official Student Enrollment - September 30, 2016, Office of Facilities Services, Prince William County Public Schools.

Other schools potentially affected by this development:

| ENROLLMENT GROWING FASTER THAN EXPECTED?* | | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|-----------------|
| | | | | 2015 to 2016 Change in Official Enrollment* | |
| School | 2015 Official Enrollment | 2016 Projected Enrollment | 2016 Official Enrollment | Numeric Change | % Change |
| Ashland ES | 969 | 727 | 800 | -169 | -17.4% |
| Coles ES | 507 | 448 | 456 | -51 | -10.1% |
| Enterprise ES | 484 | 434 | 401 | -83 | -17.1% |
| King ES | 509 | 441 | 410 | -99 | -19.4% |
| McAuliffe ES | 461 | 455 | 448 | -13 | -2.8% |
| Parks ES | 792 | 697 | 748 | -44 | -5.6% |
| Wilson ES | - | 753 | 640 | - | - |

*Data Source = Official Student Enrollment - September 30, 2016, Office of Facilities Services, Prince William County Public Schools.

TABLE 3

Under the School Division’s 2014-2015 districting, students living in this general area will attend the following schools:

| NEW HOMES UNDER DEVELOPMENT IN AREA * | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|-----------------|-----------|-----------|--------------|------------------|-----------|-----------|--------------|-----------------------------|-----------|-----------|--------------|---------------------|
| | Active** | | | | Planned** | | | | Rezoning Submitted** | | | | |
| School | SF | TH | MF | Total | SF | TH | MF | Total | SF | TH | MF | Total | School Total |
| Montclair ES | | | | | 7 | | | 7 | 43 | | | 43 | 50 |
| Saunders MS | 71 | 4 | | 75 | 18 | | | 18 | 92 | | | 92 | 185 |
| Hylton HS | 51 | 4 | | 55 | 11 | | | 11 | 92 | | | 92 | 158 |

* **Data Source** = Housing Units in Residential Development – By Elementary/Middle/High School Attendance Area and Stage of Development – September 2015, *Approved Capital Improvements Program, Fiscal Years 2017-26*, Prince William County Public Schools, pages B-18 and B-19.

****Active** = Rezoning approved by Board of County Supervisors and site development permit issued. **Planned** = Rezoning approved by Board of County Supervisors and proposed plans submitted. **Rezoning Submitted** = rezoning application submitted, CPA request submitted or initiated (if applicable), or no recent progress has occurred.

SF = Single family home. TH = Townhouse. MF = Multifamily unit.

Other schools potentially affected by this development:

| NEW HOMES UNDER DEVELOPMENT IN AREA * | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|-----------------|-----------|-----------|--------------|------------------|-----------|-----------|--------------|-----------------------------|-----------|-----------|--------------|---------------------|
| | Active** | | | | Planned** | | | | Rezoning Submitted** | | | | |
| School | SF | TH | MF | Total | SF | TH | MF | Total | SF | TH | MF | Total | School Total |
| Ashland ES | 6 | | | 6 | 65 | | | 65 | | | | | 71 |
| Coles ES | 30 | | | 30 | 21 | | | 21 | | | | | 51 |
| Enterprise ES | ? | ? | ? | ? | ? | ? | ? | ? | ? | ? | ? | ? | *** |
| King ES | 63 | | | 63 | 78 | | | 78 | | | | | 141 |
| McAuliffe ES | | 4 | | 4 | | | | | | | | | 4 |
| Parks ES | | | | | 11 | | | 11 | 10 | | | 10 | 21 |
| Wilson ES | 83 | | 52 | 135 | 29 | 30 | 163 | 222 | 39 | | | 39 | 396 |

* **Data Source** = Housing Units in Residential Development – By Elementary/Middle/High School Attendance Area and Stage of Development – September 2015, *Approved Capital Improvements Program, Fiscal Years 2017-26*, Prince William County Public Schools, pages B-18 and B-19.

****Active** = Rezoning approved by Board of County Supervisors and site development permit issued. **Planned** = Rezoning approved by Board of County Supervisors and proposed plans submitted. **Rezoning Submitted** = rezoning application submitted, CPA request submitted or initiated (if applicable), or no recent progress has occurred.

SF = Single family home. TH = Townhouse. MF = Multifamily unit.

*** Enterprise ES not listed in county’s report.

TABLE 4

Under the School Division’s 2014-2015 districting, students living in this general area will attend the following schools:

| AVERAGE CLASS SIZE* | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------------|----------------|-----------------------|----------------|-----------------------|----------------|-----------------------|----------------|-----------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| | KG | | Grade 1 | | Grade 2 | | Grade 3 | | Grade 4 | |
| School | Current | State Standard |
| Montclair ES | 26** | 24 | 26 | 24 | 25 | 24 | 26 | 24 | 23 | 25 |

***Data Source** = School Data Profiles – Elementary Schools/Middle Schools/High Schools (as of June 30, 2016), Office of Accountability, Prince William County Public Schools.

****Larger font size** = Current average class size *exceeds* the state standard.

| AVERAGE CLASS SIZE* | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------------|----------------|-----------------------|----------------|-----------------------|----------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| | English | | Math | | Science | | Social Studies | |
| School | Current | State Standard | Current | State Standard | Current | State Standard | Current | State Standard |
| Saunders MS** | 28** | 24 | 29 | *** | 30 | *** | 29 | *** |
| Hylton HS** | 27 | 24 | 23 | 21 | 20 | 21 | 28 | 21 |

***Data Source** = School Data Profiles – Elementary Schools/Middle Schools/High Schools (as of June 30, 2016), Office of Accountability, Prince William County Public Schools.

****Larger font size** = Current Average Class Size *exceeds* the state standard.

*** **State standard** = 25 students in Grade 6. 21 students in Grades 7 and 8.

TABLE 5

| DELAYS IN PLANNED NEW SCHOOLS AND CLASSROOMS IN AREA | | | | | | | |
|---|------------------------|---------------------------|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| | | | Delays in Scheduled Opening Date per Approved Capital Improvements Program (CIP)* | | | | |
| Planned New School or Addition | Location | Current Status | 2013-2022 CIP | 2014-2023 CIP | 2015-2024 CIP | 2016-2025 CIP | 2017-2026 CIP |
| 14th High School | Mid-county area | Not Funded | 2021 | 2021 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 |

* **Data Source** = *Approved Capital Improvements Program (for FY 2013-2022, 2014-2023, 2015-2024, 2016-2025 and 2017-26), Prince William County Public Schools, Page 2.*

