

City of Alexandria, Virginia

5
4-12-03

MEMORANDUM

DATE: APRIL 7, 2003

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: PHILIP SUNDERLAND, CITY MANAGER *PS*

SUBJECT: CITY COUNCIL APPROVAL OF REVISIONS TO WINDMILL HILL PARK CONCEPT PLAN

ISSUE: City Council approval of revisions to Windmill Hill Park Concept Plan.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council:

- (A) Approve the following revisions to the Windmill Hill Park Concept Plan, which Council proposed on February 25, 2003, and the resulting revised concept plan (Attachment 4):
1. Relocate the basketball court to allow for the completion of the sidewalk on the north side of Gibbon Street;
 2. Complete the sidewalk on the north side of Gibbon Street between Lee Street and Union Street so it runs to Union Street;
 3. Relocate and place the volleyball court adjacent to and just north of the basketball court;
 4. Remove the asphalt parking lot on the east side of Union along Gibbon Street extended, and clean, seed and install family-oriented equipment and furniture;
 5. Remove the gates on the east side of Union Street at the Gibbon Street extended area;
 6. Reseed the area between Union Street and the basin, provide additional plantings and install family-oriented equipment and furniture;
 7. Remove the curb cuts on the east side of Union Street at the Gibbon extended area;
 8. Restore of the area immediately north of the current dog area by trimming overgrowth, removing dead and decayed trees, and planting appropriate new materials;
 9. Improve the north end of Windmill Hill Park east of Union Street to allow for safe dog access to the river from the existing ramp;
 10. Increase the wattage of the lighting in the Wilkes Street tunnel;
 11. Install pedestrian crosswalks across Union Street where the new pathway from the Wilkes Street tunnel meets Union Street, and approximately where the new sidewalk on the north side of Gibbon meets Union Street;

12. Complete the construction of the new dog exercise area, including fencing and landscaping; and
- (B) Authorize the transfer of \$126,295 from the General Fund Contingent Reserves to the Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities FY 2003 Operating Budget.

BACKGROUND: On May 28, 2002, City Council passed a motion to amend, and approve as amended, the Windmill Hill Park Concept Plan. The amended plan provided for the relocation of the dog park to the northwest corner of the intersection of Wilkes Street (extended) and Union Street, and the relocation of the volleyball court to the area previously used and designated as a dog run area on the east side of Union Street. Council also directed staff to provide a final concept plan based on the amendments. On June 6, 2002, the City Manager provided the concept plan to City Council (Attachment 1).

In late fall 2002, staff began implementing the first phase of construction under the Windmill Hill Park Concept Plan, which included relocation of the path from the Wilkes Street tunnel, removal of the volleyball court and preparation of the new dog park area. On February 25, 2003, in response to public comments regarding the Concept Plan, Council proposed revisions to the plan, directed staff to provide cost estimates (Attachment 2), work schedules (Attachment 3) and other details as needed, and scheduled a public hearing on the proposed revisions for April 12.

DISCUSSION: The proposed revisions to the Windmill Hill Park Concept Plan are reflected in Attachment 4, and are shown in detail on aerial photos (Attachments 4A, 4B, 4C and 4D). Cost estimates for these revisions are shown in Attachment 2, and a work schedule is shown in Attachment 3. It is believed that these plan revisions will enhance the use and aesthetics of the park until such time as funding becomes available to restore the bulkhead and undertake the other major work called for by the plan.

FISCAL IMPACT: The proposed revisions total \$179,078. The relocation of the dog exercise area, at a cost of \$45,283, and the relocation of the volleyball court, at a cost of \$7,500, are currently in the Department's operating budget. The remaining \$126,295 will need to be added to the Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities operating budget in order for the improvements called for by the plan to be completed. It is recommended that these funds be provided from the FY 2003 General Fund contingent reserves account.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Attachment 1: Approved Concept Plan (May 28, 2002)
- Attachment 2: Proposed Revisions Cost Estimate
- Attachment 3: Proposed Work Schedule
- Attachment 4: Proposed Revised Concept Plan (February 26, 2003)
- Attachment 4A-4D: Photos showing Proposed Revisions

STAFF:

Sandra Whitmore, Director, Department of Recreation Parks and Cultural Activities

Kirk Kincannon, Deputy Director, Department of Recreation Parks and Cultural Activities

APPROVED CONCEPT PLAN

MAY 28, 2002



City of Alexandria

Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities

February 26, 2003

Proposed Revisions to Windmill Hill Park Concept Plan

1.	Relocate basketball court	Approximately	\$46,564
2.	Construct sidewalk adjacent to Gibbon Street	Approximately	\$4,240
3.	Relocate volleyball court adjacent to the basketball court	Approximately	\$7,500
4.	Remove asphalt parking lot on the east side of Union, clean area, seed and install family-oriented equipment and furniture.	Approximately	\$41,141
5.	Remove the gates that restrict access to the area in #4 (above). Dispose gates.	Approximately	\$1,000
6.	Reseed the area between Union and the basin, provide additional plantings, and install family-oriented equipment and furniture.	Approximately	\$6,850
7.	Remove the curb cuts on the east side of Union at the Gibbon extended area.	Approximately	\$6,000
8.	Begin the restoration of the area immediately north of the current dog area by trimming some of the overgrowth, removing dead and decayed trees and planting appropriate new materials. (Stream outfall area)	Approximately	\$4,500
9.	Make the necessary improvements at the north end of WHP to allow for dog access to the river from that ramp (Create temporary Dog Access to Water)	Approximately	\$7,000
10.	Increase wattage of the lighting in the Wilkes Street tunnel.	Lenses will be replaced by TES	
11.	Install pedestrian crosswalks across Union at the north (at the terminus of the new pathway from the Wilkes Street tunnel) and south (Gibbon extended) ends of WHP.	Approximately 2 crosswalks	\$9,000
12.	Complete the construction of the new dog exercise area, including fencing and landscaping.	Sidewalk, Landscaping and ornamental fencing	\$45,283
Total:			\$179,078

City of Alexandria


Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities

February 26, 2003

Final Revisions to Windmill Hill Park Concept Plan- Work Schedule

#	Task	March	April	May	June	July	Aug
1	Relocate basketball court						
2	Construct sidewalk adjacent to Gibbon Street						
3	Relocate volleyball court adjacent to the basketball court						
4	Remove asphalt parking lot on the east side of Union, clean area, seed and install family-oriented equipment and furniture.						
5	Remove the gates that restrict access to the area in #4 (above)						
6	Re-seed the area between Union and the basin, provide additional plantings, and install family-oriented equipment and furniture.						
7	Remove the curb cuts on the east side of Union at the Gibbon extended area.						
8	Begin the restoration of the area immediately north of the current dog area. (Stream outfall area)						
9	Make the necessary improvements at the north end of WHP to allow for dog access to the river from that ramp. (Create temporary Dog Access)						
10	Increase wattage of the lighting in the Wilkes Street tunnel.						
11	Install pedestrian crosswalks across Union at the north (at the terminus of the new pathway from the Wilkes Street tunnel) and south (Gibbon						
12	Complete the construction of the new dog exercise area, including fencing and landscaping.						



 CITY OF ALEXANDRIA DEPARTMENT OF
PARKS AND RECREATION





Windmill Hill Park Interim Plan

Final Revisions to Concept Plan: Revisions # 4,5,7 & 8

30 15 0 30 Feet

3/7/03





Windmill Hill Park Interim Plan

Final Revisions to Concept Plan: Revision #6



Interim Dog Access to Water Windmill Hill Park

February 2003

Not to Scale



April 12, 2003

To the Mayor of Alexandria and Members
of the City Council -

I am writing in opposition to proposed changes to the Windmill park area. I had come to City Hall this morning to speak to the issue personally. However, since the proposal's discussion has now been postponed, I am submitting my views in this brief statement.

I have lived in Old Town Alexandria - residing at 223 S. Lee St. - for 8 years. I have enjoyed the park and believe that it very adequately serves multiple uses in its current layout. No changes in the park functions are necessary or warranted. In fact, making changes to the park in its current form is inconsistent with recommendations of the citizens' task force and in my view - and the view of others in the community I've talked to - would only amount to the expenditure of resources to fix something that is NOT broken.

Thank you for your consideration. I am strongly opposed to the proposed changes to the park layout.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Denise J. Bell".

Denise J. Bell

223 S. Lee St.

Alexandria, VA 22314

April 12, 2003

Dear Mr. Mayor and Members of the City Council :

I reside at 212 South Lee Street in Old Town,
Alexandria.

I am writing to express my strong opposition to
any changes in the Windmill Park located on
Union Street.

This park is an important part of the local
community and no alterations are needed. Dogs and
people alike benefit from this resource and no
tax dollars should be spent to change this park.

Thank you.

Deborah Smulyan
Phone 703-519-4262

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4-12-03

Robert Bisson
206 So. Lee St.

"Why spend money fixing something that ain't broke?"

We would like to make a simple point and present a local dog-owner's perspective about the lack of logic in the last-minute switch of dog park venues made by City Council without benefit of a public hearing. The relevant colloquialism is "Why spend money fixing something that ain't broke?"

The current dog park location possesses natural topography totally conducive to off-leash activities for dogs and their owners, who are just as active as the dogs in their enjoyment of that particular dog park. Why is this true? Because the dog owners at Windmill Park are actually people, who very much enjoy the views and the ambience of relaxing (not running through watching a heart monitor) in a pleasant waterfront location while talking with their other human friends and watching their favorite "man's best friends" also really enjoy themselves as social animals. The unique lay of the land at the current Windmill dog park keeps the dogs naturally contained within a easily maintained space without the need for ugly fences and also allows water-loving dogs to access shallow water with firm bottom for 100 feet from shore and virtually no danger of currents sweeping a dog (or its owner) away from shore. A small, inexpensive modification to the current walking path through the park, redirecting foot traffic straight through to Union Street along a new path, with identical 3 ft-high wrought iron fence, and parallel to, the Fords Landing townhouses fence line, would eliminate all potential conflict between pedestrians and dog owners.

In sharp contrast to this natural waterfront dog park, the new location west of Union Street involves injecting a totally artificial "containment area" for dogs into an existing, perfectly suited children's park, where the new "dog pen" will likely become a worry to the moms and kids, an eyesore to neighbors and an enclosure within which dog owners are unlikely to stay with their dogs. Equally importantly, the remote Harborside swimming location will require owners to leash and lead their dogs across Union Street and Harborside's southern lawns to enter deep water where dogs can easily be caught in tidal or flood currents and swept downstream out of reach of owners. Owners who try to recover their dogs are also in danger of being swept away. In fact, one drowning has recently occurred at the Harborside Yacht basin related to local strong currents.

In closing we would like to remind the City Council and other citizens of Alexandria that the socializing that goes on among dog owners when walking their dogs is possibly the most common form of civilized social interaction among people practiced on a twice or more daily basis in the City of Alexandria. Old Town is especially renowned for its dog-friendly environment, and proof of this fact is evident to anyone observing the wonderful social events happening every day at our dog parks (especially the unique Windmill waterfront park) or at the Holiday Inn on Tuesday or Thursday coffee or cocktail hours or the many parades that feature Old Town's dogs and their owners as a central theme.

Many residents of the neighborhoods near the waterfront of Old Town live here in some part because of this dog-friendly attitude and the particularly pleasant experience of sharing the warm social atmosphere of Windmill riverside dog park with their dogs and their neighbors.

Please reconsider your decision in light of the fact that the current Windmill riverside dog park really works, while changing the location will actually create a more expensive, ugly, unsafe and no longer enjoyable "dog pen" for Old Town's many dog-owning families.

GAINING SOME PERSPECTIVE ON THE LAND USE & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF OLD TOWN'S 1/4-ACRE UNION STREET DOG PARK

The Potomac River, which is the second largest tributary to the Chesapeake Bay, drains 11,570 square miles (7,404,800 acres) of diverse physiography. Geology and land use in the basin are important contributors to water-quality characteristics of the river. Major water-quality issues in the upper basin are coal mining, forestry, raw- and treated-sewage effluent, acid precipitation, and toxic substances such as dioxin from paper mills.

One-third of all river sites tested in the Potomac headwaters of West Virginia exceed bacteria safety standards. West Virginia has no program for regulating environmental pollution from poultry, which produces about 155,000 tons of manure each year. The headwaters of the Potomac River have long been home to West Virginia agriculture, with poultry and cattle farms dominating the countryside. Major food corporations have been the driving force behind agricultural expansion, with Wampler Foods' chicken processing plant in Moorefield at the geographic hub of this growth. Other major corporations -- Tyson Foods, Inc., Perdue and Rocco Turkey -- have spurred growth in chicken houses by contracting with poultry farms in the state to supply their chicken processing plants in neighboring Virginia. Some of the state's political leaders have been eager to lure large corporations to the state with economic incentives for opening new poultry farms and processing plants. Leaders in the West Virginia legislature recently introduced a bill giving a large tax subsidy to industry for jobs created by agricultural expansion.

Intensive agriculture in Potomac Headwaters region has led to alarming levels of bacteria in the river and its tributaries and spurred excessive algae and siltation. A 1994-1995 study completed by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) and sponsored by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) indicates that one third of all sites tested in the headwaters of the Potomac exceeded accepted bacterial safety standards. Many stretches of this great river are no longer safe for recreation. The high levels of fecal coliform bacteria that have been measured in Potomac waters indicate that swimmers run the risk of infection from disease-causing organisms like *Salmonella*, *Giardia* and *Cryptosporidium*. The world class recreational resources of Smoke Hole, the Trough, and Seneca Rocks in the South Branch area of the Potomac -- all locations favored by tourists for canoeing, fishing and swimming -- are threatened by this pollution. State agencies and the U.S. Department of Agriculture recently came to this alarming conclusion: *A high potential exists for contraction of waterborne illnesses in the Potomac Headwaters because of the widespread presence of bacteria throughout the watershed and heavy dependence on the streams for drinking water and for water contact recreation.... The report further states that the numbers of feedlots and poultry houses per square mile also correlate with concentrations of fecal coliform, fecal streptococci, and nitrates.*

Additional testing done in 1996 and 1997 by the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection (WVDEP) supports the USGS study of 1994 and 1995. In 1996, the state classified as "impaired" seven tributaries of the Potomac headwaters, including the South Branch of the Potomac, the South Fork of the South Branch and the North Fork of the South Branch.

The impaired classification indicates that many of these waters are so polluted they can no longer support swimming or fishing. **Agriculture is cited as the cause of this pollution.** All seven of the Potomac tributaries on the impaired list were new additions due to recent data indicating serious water quality problems.

Chicken processing plants pose an additional pollution threat to the area. **Wampler Foods' poultry processing plant in Moorefield, which has a NPDES permit under the Clean Water Act, is barred under the Act from dumping its waste into town facilities without approval from the state.** Wampler has been cited for unauthorized disposal of some of its industrial waste into the town sewage treatment facility. For several months in 1995, Moorefield's sewage treatment plant spilled raw sewage into the South Branch, in part due to the failure of the town's sewage waste lagoon. Some citizens of the community suspect that the town's sewage treatment problems were linked to the town's illegal acceptance of untreated industrial waste from Wampler. A local sewage treatment plant operator reported poultry feathers in the town lagoon on a number of occasions. Wampler and the town of Moorefield have each been the subject of two enforcement actions by the Department of Environmental Protection for this activity.

The Potomac Headwaters area has also suffered four major floods in recent memory, one in 1985 and three in 1996. **The floods intensified pollution from the region's poultry and cattle industries as rushing torrents washed animal waste from croplands and farm buildings into nearby waterways. Following flooding from Hurricane Fran in 1996, "one of the biggest public health threats was 268,000 chicken and 56,000 turkey carcasses" that had died in the floods, according to a state Department of Agriculture spokesperson.** Other local problems have involved nuisance complaints. Moorefield residents have lost business because of the overwhelming odors and flies. One local restaurant owner complained her herb garden died due to the toxicity of the air. Another resident told the County Commission he can no longer use his well because of pollution from poultry manure stored and spread near his house. The Potomac Headwaters of West Virginia supply some of the drinking water for many towns downstream.

The Washington D.C. metropolitan area, which is downstream from the Potomac Headwaters, last year began having bacteria outbreaks in its drinking water system. For the second year in a row, the Potomac is listed as one of the 20 most endangered rivers in the country **due to agriculture and land development.** This news comes after several years of celebrating a clean-up campaign that made it possible for Washington-area residents to safely fish and swim in the river after decades of pollution had put it off-limits. "The unfettered expansion of the poultry industry could very well undo much of the progress that has been made in the last 25 years," an American Rivers spokesperson recently warned.

The Potomac River empties into the Chesapeake Bay, bringing nitrogen and phosphorus pollution from the river's source in West Virginia. The health of the Bay's fish and shellfish is seriously threatened by a glut of these inputs emanating from manure and fertilizer used at surrounding farms. In 1987, the Chesapeake Bay Agreement, signed by the District of Columbia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Virginia, agreed to reduce nutrient pollution to the Bay by forty percent by the year 2000. While

almost 25 percent of the Potomac watershed lies in West Virginia, and about 13 percent of the nutrients delivered to the Bay by the Potomac comes from West Virginia, the state refused to sign this document and cooperate with neighboring states. In doing so, the state also declined federal assistance for reducing nutrient pollution to the Chesapeake Bay. West Virginia, despite its renegade status, was asked to attend Governor Glendening's Chesapeake summit this year on *Pfeisteria*, an algae that thrives in nutrient-polluted waters and has caused major fish kills. Unfortunately, the summit agreement West Virginia signed was limited to information-sharing and included no commitment to reduce nutrient pollution of the Bay.

Above ground, **Washington DC** is a modern, 21st century metropolis but beneath it lurks an antiquated sewer system that brings to mind a bygone era. **During heavy rains, stormwater often swamps the city's ancient overflow system, sending untreated raw sewage into the Anacostia and Potomac rivers. During these events, fecal coliform levels can exceed the legal standard by hundreds or thousands of times, resulting in chronic violation of the Clean Water Act.** Besides the obvious threats to human health, these releases can adversely affect aquatic life in these important tributaries of the Chesapeake Bay.

The Blue Plains plant receives 43% of its waste water from the District and 47% from the suburbs including Montgomery county in Maryland, Fairfax and Loudoun counties in Virginia, the U.S. Park Service and Dulles Airport. Approximately 300,000,000 gallons of sewage is processed each day at Blue Plains. This generates 1,700 tons of sludge per day. This plant is the largest on the Potomac River and has an immense effect on the river. Combined sewers serve about one-third of the District. Most of them are located in older developed sections of the District. During dry weather conditions, sewage flowing through the combined sewer system is conveyed to the District of Columbia's Advanced Wastewater Treatment Plant at Blue Plains where the wastewater is treated to remove pollutants before discharge into the Potomac River. **When the capacity of a combined sewer is exceeded during major storms, the excess flow is discharged from up to 59 CSO outfalls to the Anacostia and Potomac Rivers, Rock Creek and tributary waters. In an average year, there are about 82 overflows events in the Anacostia River; 75 in the Potomac River, and 30 in Rock Creek.**

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4-12-03

Statement of Michael E. Hobbs
419 Cameron Street
re Windmill Hill Park
April 12, 2003

Mayor Donley, Vice Mayor Cleveland, and Members of Council: thank you for the opportunity to speak this morning on the subject of Windmill Hill Park.

Apart from the merits of the design elements in the plan for the park, I would urge you also to consider the process by which you are arriving at those decisions. Because the process you employ speaks not only to the decision on the current question, but even more fundamentally to the degree to which our city government genuinely welcomes, values and respects the opinion of its citizens on questions of public policy, both in fact and perhaps equally importantly, in the public's perception of that process.

At least one element of the new park design you are considering today would be of very great interest to the neighbors—that is, the relocation of the volleyball court from the east to the west side of Union Street, immediately adjacent to the basketball court and the residences on Gibbon Street. I would imagine that the residents on Gibbon Street might have some views on the subject, and would hope to have fair opportunity to learn of the proposal and make their views known to you. But no public notice was posted at the site, and so far as I know, those living nearby received no notice in the mail of the new construction that is proposed, nor of the public hearing. When a private property owner wants to make a significant change to his property, he is required to send a notice to the adjoining property owners of what is proposed, and when the proposal will be considered and decided by the city. Should not the city hold itself to at least the same standard of due notice that it expects of private property owners?

I've heard it said that the city might not be required by law to give notice in this case. But whether or not it is strictly required as a matter of law, does the city really want to be in the position of appearing to escape a sense of obligation to its citizens by means of a legal technicality? Surely the standard for the conduct of the city council's business should be, not

merely that it did not act illegally, but that it acted affirmatively with genuine interest and concern for the views of its citizens, and a clear sense of accountability to them.

You have heard the complaint before that when you adopted a concept plan for Windmill Hill Park last spring, that action was taken without a prior opportunity for citizens to learn what was proposed and to make their views known to you in a public hearing. And the public hearing this morning, though appreciated, was scheduled with less than a week's notice to citizens who might have wanted to plan to attend and offer testimony. Regardless of your views on the merits of the present issue, I would urge you to consider how the process you employ affects the citizens' perception of the integrity and validity of your decision. For even if you reach a correct decision on the merits of a particular question, if you do so through a process which appears to have circumvented or disrespected the views of your citizens, the cost may be too high in the damage that is done to the fabric of citizen participation in the process of governance which we all treasure as a hallmark of our great city.

Thank you for your consideration.

Partial Verbatim
Item No. 5 Windmill Hill Park Concept Plan
Saturday, April 12, 2003

Woodson: I would, I'm uncomfortable with the, with the delay to May 27. I think that's ridiculous. It's just, it's way too far out. We have gone over this over and over and over and over and over again, and I don't see any time like the present. I would like to make a substitute motion to that effect, and I would like to do a couple of things with the docket item. I would like to change item #3. It would strike the language that's there now and it would then say "replace the volleyball court where it was." I would like,

Mayor: Where?

Woodson: Where it was prior to it being removed which is on the west side of the street on the north end. I would like to change language in item #4 because there are many people in the city who find "family-oriented" to be discriminatory, and so I would like "family-oriented" to read "appropriate." Equipment and furniture? You follow me? Item #4. I would like to eliminate item #9, and I would like to change item #12 to read as follows: "Complete the construction of the new dog exercise area as for, as per the Task Force plan, and I would like for us to vote on that today."

Pepper: Second.

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City Council Public Hearing April 12, 2003
Item #5 "City Council Approval of Revisions to Windmill Hill Park Concept Plan"

Good afternoon. I am Carolyn Merck, President of the Old Town Civic Association, and I am speaking for that organization.

David Olinger, who lives at 100 Prince St. signed up to speak today, but found he cannot be here at this time. He would like to let me use his 3 minutes, too.

You have before you 12 items regarding changes and improvements to Windmill Hill Park. My understanding is that, although you voted on these items at the February 25th legislative meeting, you will be voting on them again today.

Thus, this is a good opportunity for you to listen to the public before you act.

The OTCA is happy to endorse 9 of the 12 items appearing in the City Manager's memorandum prepared for this hearing. We welcome the plans to shift the basketball court to allow for building a sidewalk along Gibbon Street; broken asphalt and the old curb-cut should be removed, grassy areas reseeded, and new seating will be a welcome addition.

However, we most emphatically urge you to remove items 3, 9, and 12 from the list of revisions to the park plan. These are:

- 3) Relocation of the volleyball court to the *west* side of South Union St., adjacent to the basketball court;
- 9) Location of the dog-river access point at the so-called north side of the Park; and

12) Installation of fencing and other changes to locate the dog exercise area on the site formerly used for volleyball.

These three items go to the heart of what OTCA and park users have been saying since Council undertook to reorganize the park last summer, a reorganization that is simply not a good, sensible design for this park.

We propose that these three items be replaced with two new items:

First, that the park organization plan, as submitted by the Windmill Hill Park Steering Committee with regard to the location of the volleyball court and the dog exercise area, replace the current proposed plan;

Second, that a design similar to that submitted by Councilwoman Woodson on February 25th for improving the *existing* dog-river access point be added. That design would minimize the chance that a wet dog might encounter a passing pedestrian.

Let me explain our proposal.

The basic land use decision for this area has been made: it is to be a public park, enjoyed by area residents, residents of other sections of town, and visitors. For decades it has been, and will continue to be a park with *multiple* uses. Some of the uses of this park fit well together, others don't, and should be separated.

Over 30 years ago, I and my family lived on Pommander Walk, and we had a little dog. Like others in the area, we took our pet across Union Street to the "Vacant Lot," as we called it, before the term "dog exercise area" was fashionable. We did this because the lot was safely removed from the space where children played,... a berm naturally buffered it from pedestrians, and the gully, shrubs and trees kept the dogs from interfering with people at the yacht

basin. Dogs could not run onto the basketball court, join a game of catch or frisbee, run after playing children, or soil the ground where people might sit or play.

Moreover, until now, this lot was regarded as a kind of "left over" piece of land, largely because it is cut off from the riverfront to its north and south. For over 35 years, nobody said they wanted to use it differently. That is, not until now, when its primary use is football.....political football.

The *volleyball* court is the other major concern we have regarding a common sense approach to park uses. OTCA opposes locating the volleyball court on the EAST side of union street because we believe that the immediate river front should be free of structural clutter, and volleyball courts are indeed unlovely, structural clutter.

However, the new proposal, new as of February 25th, to move it *next to the basketball court* is unwise for several reasons, which other speakers today will address. The original location of the volleyball court, like the dog exercise area, grew out of a commonsensible separation of uses. Before the city built a structured volleyball court including sand, people just brought their own nets and played on the grass, but they did so where they would be out of the way of other games and running children. Now, as a structured sand court, placed in the central park lawn area, it would *reduce* the wonderful open space used for pick-up games and other play.

Moreover, locating basketball and volleyball together intensifies, in one place, *very* active sports, and concentrates them in front of the residences on Gibbon and Lee Streets. This would be done with *no notice to those residents or opportunity for public comment*. That is unfair. It should be against City policy.

The location of the volleyball court made sense where it was originally. Please, use your common sense. Put it back where it does not disrupt other park uses.

Members of Council, *we implore you* to listen to what the community is saying. We are not making this request because we are mindlessly stuck in the past or are unable to accept change. We are saying that the design of the park emerged from sensible, practical considerations regarding proper separation of a wide range of park uses.

People from all over town may use the basketball court, *and they do*. People from all over town may use the volleyball court, *and they do*. People from all over town may bring their children to play in the tot-lot or ride down the hill on sleds in the snow, *and they do*. People from all over town may bring their dogs to the exercise area, *and they do*.

Nearby neighbors and people from all over town have been using this park for years and enjoying the waterfront there. Please listen to the community. *Leave the park the way it has always worked best for all park users.*

We, the undersigned, support the Windmill Hill Park Task Force's plan for the organization of the park...to wit: Keeping the park's dog exercise area in the same location it has been for the past 30+ years, and leaving the park's volleyball court in the vicinity of its location for the past 30+ years. Furthermore, we support the realignment of the trail from the Wilkes Street Railroad Tunnel to South Union Street as it is depicted on the Task Force's final plan for the park, not the City Council's new serpentine alignment. And finally, we urge that any money that can be saved by deleting the planned construction, operation and maintenance of the Council's proposed new dog exercise area be returned to the City Treasury to be used for general park maintenance throughout the city during these times of financial stress.

	Signature	Address
1)	Yvonne Weight (Yvonne Weight)	735 S. Lee St.
2)	SARITA SCHOTTA (S. Schotta)	104 PRINCE
3)	Sean P Smith	107 PRINCE
4)	Julie Brantley	7 Keith's Lane
5)	James Haysle	3010 W. GUNN DAM Circle #209 Alex VA 22302
6)	Charles Scholtz	104 Prince
7)	Jim LETTENBERGER	107 PRINCE
8)	Sharon Kelly	808 S. Lee St
9)	Jack Cooper	722 S. Washington #20
10)	E. BILANG	103 Colville Dr.
11)	Robert Ritsch	419 Franklin St.
12)	Patricia X. Levy	419 Franklin St.
13)	Megash	501 S. Washington
14)	Ed St.	708 S Lee
15)	Eric J. Frydli	708 S Lee
16)	[Signature]	702 S. Lee St.
17)	Gene Andelman	702 S. Lee St.
18)	Sara Armstrong	701 S. Lee St.
19)	Dave Armstrong	701 S. Lee St.
20)	Gina Baum	224 N. St. Asaph St
	Dan Baum	11 11 11

Windmill Hill Park

We, the undersigned, support the Windmill Hill Park Task Force's plan for the organization of the park...to wit: Keeping the park's dog exercise area in the same location it has been for the past 30+ years, and leaving the park's volleyball court in the vicinity of its location for the past 30+ years. Furthermore, we support the realignment of the trail from the Wilkes Street Railroad Tunnel to South Union Street as it is depicted on the Task Force's final plan for the park, not the City Council's new serpentine alignment. And finally, we urge that any money that can be saved by deleting the planned construction, operation and maintenance of the Council's proposed new dog exercise area be returned to the City Treasury to be used for general park maintenance throughout the city during these times of financial stress.

	<u>Signature</u>	<u>Address</u>
1)	<u>Kathleen Haugh</u>	<u>27 Wilkes Street</u>
2)	<u>Wm H. H. H.</u>	<u>468 South Union Street</u>
3)	<u>J. H. H.</u>	<u>468 S. Union St.</u>
4)	<u>Wm P. H.</u>	<u>460 S. Union St.</u>
5)	<u>John H. H.</u>	<u>458 S. Union Street</u>
6)	<u>Brian Buzzell</u>	<u>One Wilkes St</u>
7)	<u>Judy Buzzell</u>	<u>One Wilkes St</u>
8)	<u>Polly Bannerman</u>	<u>3 Wilkes Street</u>
9)	<u>William Bannerman</u>	<u>" Wilkes Street</u>
10)	<u>John E. Gullette</u>	<u>474 S. UNION STREET</u>
11)	<u>Christine D. Gullette</u>	<u>474 S. UNION STREET</u>
12)	<u>John Haugh</u>	<u>27 Wilkes St.</u>
13)	<u>Clara H. H.</u>	<u>13 Wilkes St</u>
14)	<u>John H. H.</u>	<u>724 S. St. Asaph</u>
15)	<u>John H. H.</u>	<u>13 WILKES ST.</u>
16)	<u>Joan Hazzan</u>	<u>44 Wolfe Street</u>
17)	<u>Seamus Hazzan</u>	<u>44 Wolfe St</u>
18)	<u>John H. H.</u>	<u>46 Wolfe St</u>
19)	<u>Nanci H. H.</u>	<u>22 Wolfe St</u>
20)	<u>John H. H.</u>	<u>22 Wolfe St.</u>

Windmill Hill Park

p2

We, the undersigned, support the Windmill Hill Park Task Force's plan for the organization of the park...to wit: Keeping the park's dog exercise area in the same location it has been for the past 30+ years, and leaving the park's volleyball court in the vicinity of its location for the past 30+ years. Furthermore, we support the realignment of the trail from the Wilkes Street Railroad Tunnel to South Union Street as it is depicted on the Task Force's final plan for the park, not the City Council's new serpentine alignment. And finally, we urge that any money that can be saved by deleting the planned construction, operation and maintenance of the Council's proposed new dog exercise area be returned to the City Treasury to be used for general park maintenance throughout the city during these times of financial stress.

Signature

Address

- 1) Michelle Kross 472 S. Union St. Alex. 22314
- 2) Bonnie Bourgin 25 Wilkes St. Alex 22314
- 3) Gregory J. Moore 32 Wolfe St Alex 22314
- 4) Robert Weeching 32 Wolfe St Alex 22314
- 5) Ray Thomas 470 S. Union St Alex 22314
- 6) Robert D. Dyer 409 S. Union St. Alex. 22314
- 7) Charles R. Bandy 56 WOLFEST, ALEX 22314
- 8) Ismael M. Van Fleet 26 Wolfe St. Alex 22314
- 9) Regina Wagner 711 S. Lee St. Alex 22314
- 10) Alfred 107 Rpm Pl Alex VA 22302
- 11) William G. Andrews 313 WOLFE ST ALEX VA 22314
- 12) Carol Anderson 313 WOLFE ST Alex 22314
- 13) Sharon Halverson 17 Wilkes St. Alex 22314
- 14) Dudley Rasmussen 66 Wolfe St. Alexandria, VA 22314
- 15) _____
- 16) _____
- 17) _____
- 18) _____
- 19) _____
- 20) _____

Windmill Hill Park

We, the undersigned, support the Windmill Hill Park Task Force's plan for the organization of the park...to wit: Keeping the park's dog exercise area in the same location it has been for the past 30+ years, and leaving the park's volleyball court in the vicinity of its location for the past 30+ years. Furthermore, we support the realignment of the trail from the Wilkes Street Railroad Tunnel to South Union Street as it is depicted on the Task Force's final plan for the park, not the City Council's new serpentine alignment. And finally, we urge that any money that can be saved by deleting the planned construction, operation and maintenance of the Council's proposed new dog exercise area be returned to the City Treasury to be used for general park maintenance throughout the city during these times of financial stress.

Signature

Address

- | | | |
|-----|----------------------------|--|
| 1) | <u>Sarah Cagle</u> | <u>101 S. St. Asaph Street #3</u> |
| 2) | <u>Mark Nall</u> | <u>609 S. St. Asaph St</u> |
| 3) | <u>Abigail E. B. B. B.</u> | <u>423 So Lee St</u> |
| 4) | <u>Manlyr Baker</u> | <u>570 S. Fanning</u> |
| 5) | <u>D. M. M. M.</u> | <u>600 FORDS LANDING WAY</u> |
| 6) | <u>Frank M. Foley</u> | <u>102 Gibbon St Alex</u> |
| 7) | <u>EVERON RODRIGUEZ</u> | <u>600 LEE. ALEXANDRIA</u> |
| 8) | <u>P. Margaret Wylie</u> | <u>320 N. Alfred St. Alexandria VA</u> |
| 9) | <u>Justin Holland</u> | <u>410 S. Royal St. Alexandria</u> |
| 10) | <u>Jesse Cameron</u> | <u>616 S FAIRFAX ST ALEX VA</u> |
| 11) | | |
| 12) | | |
| 13) | | |
| 14) | | |
| 15) | | |
| 16) | | |
| 17) | | |
| 18) | | |
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| 20) | | |

Windmill Hill Park

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Signature

Address

- 1) Holley Kilcullen 464 S. Union St 22314
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____
- 6) _____
- 7) _____
- 8) _____
- 9) _____
- 10) _____
- 11) _____
- 12) _____
- 13) _____
- 14) _____
- 15) _____
- 16) _____
- 17) _____
- 18) _____
- 19) _____
- 20) _____

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	<i>Signature</i>	<i>Address</i>
1)	<i>Diane Gravo</i>	<i>316 S. Lee St</i>
2)	<i>Joan M. Pape</i>	<i>322 322 S. Lee St,</i>
3)	<i>Leah M. Orze</i>	<i>322 S. Lee St</i>
4)	<i>Art K. Orz</i>	<i>330 S Lee St</i>
5)	<i>Jim Bellme</i>	<i>330 S. Lee St</i>
6)	<i>Francis H. P. A</i>	<i>401 South Lee</i>
7)	<i>Don Dwyer</i>	<i>317 S Lee St</i>
8)	<i>De Shoor</i>	<i>317 S. Lee Street</i>
9)	<i>Melanne Celler</i>	<i>626 S. St. Asaph St.</i>
10)	<i>David C. Roehufish</i>	<i>626 S. St. Asaph St.</i>
11)	<i>Emily Thorne</i>	<i>313 S. Lee St</i>
12)	<i>PL X Z L L</i>	<i>311 S. Lee St</i>
13)	<i>PL X Z L L</i>	<i>311 S. Lee St.</i>
14)	<i>Mary Nell Lead</i>	<i>309 S. Lee</i>
15)	<i>Gabelet Webster</i>	<i>304 S. Lee St.</i>
16)	<i>Catherine M. Weber</i>	<i>304 S Lee St</i>
17)	<i>Mary Ann Cusack</i>	<i>106 Duke St.</i>
18)	<i>John W. Dixon</i>	<i>111 Duke St</i>
19)	<i>John W. Dixon</i>	<i>111 Duke St.</i>
20)	<i>Donna S. Lee</i>	<i>310 S. Lee St</i>

Windmill Hill Park

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Signature

Address

- | | | |
|-----|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1) | <u>Elizabeth J. Nye</u> | <u>314 S. LEE ST.</u> |
| 2) | <u>Kelly D. White</u> | <u>323 S. Lee St.</u> |
| 3) | <u>William Stoltz</u> | <u>414 S LEE ST</u> |
| 4) | <u>Marshall D. Berkan</u> | <u>211 WOLFE STREET</u> |
| 5) | <u>Hansb Lane</u> | <u>319 So. Saint Asaph</u> |
| 6) | <u>Bruce Bluff</u> | <u>861 S. South P.H.</u> |
| 7) | <u>Jim C. Sead</u> | <u>309 S. LEE ST</u> |
| 8) | <u>Margaret Goveley</u> | <u>1204 S. Washington St #702</u> |
| 9) | <u>Adriana H. Ellis</u> | <u>313 N. Alfred St.</u> |
| 10) | <u>[Signature]</u> | <u>224 S Alfred St</u> |
| 11) | <u>JAN A FERNI</u> | <u>220 S. Royal St</u> |
| 12) | <u>Jim [Signature]</u> | <u>612 S. Lee St</u> |
| 13) | <u>Ed [Signature]</u> | <u>612 S. Lee</u> |
| 14) | <u>Cristina [Signature]</u> | <u>129 Prince St</u> |
| 15) | <u>D. Keele Cornin</u> | <u>204 Franklin Street</u> |
| 16) | <u>Elizabeth Schultz</u> | <u>307 Prince St</u> |
| 17) | <u>Greg Holt</u> | <u>307 Prince St</u> |
| 18) | <u>[Signature]</u> | <u>209 Wolfe St</u> |
| 19) | <u>[Signature]</u> | <u>160 Prince St</u> |
| 20) | <u>Eliza Saunders</u> | <u>122 Cameron Mews</u> |

Windmill Hill Park

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Signature

Address

- 1) [Signature] 216 Prince St, Rear
- 2) Melany McQuill 216 Prince St.
- 3) Kara McQuill 724 S. St. Asaph St.
- 4) Beal Jowers 321 S. LEE STREET
- 5) Hattie Barker 321 S. Lee St.
- 6) Robert D. Lill 401 S. Lee St.
- 7) Lancy Kegan Smith 401 S. Lee St.
- 8) Anda Hunter 224 S LEE
- 9) Megan 115 N Lee ST
- 10) [Signature] 109 S. Lee St.
- 11) Ross Wally 505 Jannys Lane
- 12) Steve Krenker 407 S. Union
- 13) Donna Kynish 407 S. Union
- 14) Michelle Bunting 420 S. LEE ST
- 15) Daniel Albright 435 S. Lee St
- 16) [Signature] 230 S. Fairway
- 17) A. Phares 123 Wolfe St.
- 18) JP Jordan 212 Duke St
- 19) Karen Buck 108 Wolfe St
- 20) JOE HEALY 1129 POWHATAN ST.

Windmill Hill Park

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	Signature	Address
1)		1002 Prince
2)		1002 Prince
3)		318 S. Lee St
4)		708 S. Fairfax St
5)		708 S. Fairfax St.
6)		318 S. Lee St.
7)		218 N. Lee St.
8)		401 Holland Lane
9)		218 N. Lee St.
10)		112 Duke St.
11)		100 DUKE ST.
12)		117 Duke St.
13)		" "
14)		201 Duke Street
15)		205 Duke St.
16)		207 Duke St
17)		209 Duke St.
18)		209 Duke St.
19)		211 Duke ST
20)		211 Duke St

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Signature

Address

- | | | |
|-----|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1) | <u>Sara Winstanley</u> | <u>701 S. Lee Street</u> |
| 2) | <u>Sandra C Botkin</u> | <u>320 S. Lee St.</u> |
| 3) | <u>George Botkin</u> | <u>320 S. LEE ST.</u> |
| 4) | <u>John Bliss</u> | <u>402 S Lee St.</u> |
| 5) | <u>John W. Winstanley</u> | <u>411 S. Lee St.</u> |
| 6) | <u>David B. Marcus</u> | <u>406 S. Lee St.</u> |
| 7) | <u>Manuel L. L. L.</u> | <u>624 60th St Alex.</u> |
| 8) | <u>John D. D.</u> | <u>418 So Lee St.</u> |
| 9) | <u>Marianne L. L.</u> | <u>604 S. Lee St.</u> |
| 10) | <u>Elizabeth Allen</u> | <u>207 Jefferson St.</u> |
| 11) | <u>John H. H.</u> | <u>604 S. Lee St.</u> |
| 12) | <u>John H. H.</u> | <u>610 S LEE ST #2</u> |
| 13) | <u>John H. H.</u> | <u>610 S. LEE ST #1</u> |
| 14) | <u>Karyl H. H.</u> | <u>610 S. LEE ST. #1</u> |
| 15) | <u>Pat H. H.</u> | <u>202 JEFFERSON</u> |
| 16) | <u>Kim H. H.</u> | <u>202 JEFFERSON</u> |
| 17) | <u>Franklin Payne</u> | <u>713 Lee St</u> |
| 18) | <u>Michael L. L.</u> | <u>418 S. Lee St</u> |
| 19) | <u>Carol L. L.</u> | <u>314 S Lee St.</u> |
| 20) | <u>Paul L. L.</u> | <u>316 S. Lee St</u> |

Windmill Hill Park

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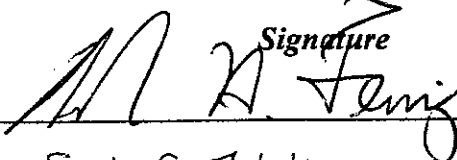
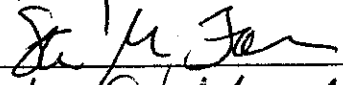

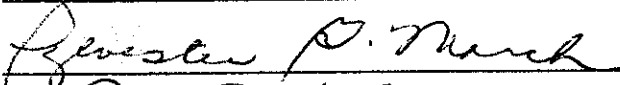

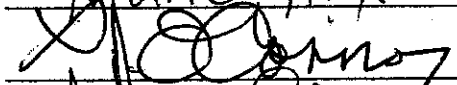
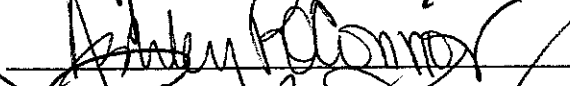
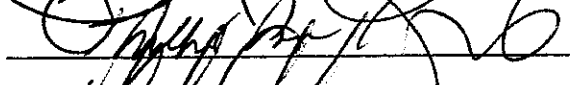
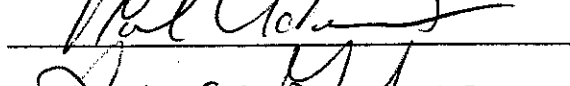
Signature

Address

- | | | |
|-----|--------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1) | <i>[Signature]</i> | <i>135 S FAIRFAX ST</i> |
| 2) | <i>[Signature]</i> | <i>212 Prince St. Alex</i> |
| 3) | <i>[Signature]</i> | <i>212 Prince Street, Alexandria</i> |
| 4) | <i>[Signature]</i> | <i>113 S. Lee Street</i> |
| 5) | <i>[Signature]</i> | <i>129 Prince Street</i> |
| 6) | <i>[Signature]</i> | <i>116 Prince Str.</i> |
| 7) | <i>[Signature]</i> | <i>114 Prince St</i> |
| 8) | <i>[Signature]</i> | <i>106 Prince St.</i> |
| 9) | <i>[Signature]</i> | <i>110 Prince St</i> |
| 10) | <i>[Signature]</i> | <i>110 Prince St</i> |
| 11) | <i>[Signature]</i> | <i>100 Prince St.</i> |
| 12) | <i>[Signature]</i> | <i>205 S. Lee Street</i> |
| 13) | <i>[Signature]</i> | <i>205 S. Lee Street</i> |
| 14) | <i>[Signature]</i> | <i>206 S. Lee St.</i> |
| 15) | <i>[Signature]</i> | <i>206 S. Lee St</i> |
| 16) | <i>[Signature]</i> | <i>212 South Lee Street</i> |
| 17) | <i>[Signature]</i> | <i>214 S. Lee St</i> |
| 18) | <i>[Signature]</i> | <i>218 S Lee St</i> |
| 19) | <i>[Signature]</i> | <i>226 South Lee St.</i> |
| 20) | <i>[Signature]</i> | <i>225 S. Lee St.</i> |

Windmill Hill Park

We, the undersigned, support the Windmill Hill Park Task Force's plan for the organization of the park...to wit: Keeping the park's dog exercise area in the same location it has been for the past 30+ years, and leaving the park's volleyball court in the vicinity of its location for the past 30+ years. Furthermore, we support the realignment of the trail from the Wilkes Street Railroad Tunnel to South Union Street as it is depicted on the Task Force's final plan for the park, not the City Council's new serpentine alignment. And finally, we urge that any money that can be saved by deleting the planned construction, operation and maintenance of the Council's proposed new dog exercise area be returned to the City Treasury to be used for general park maintenance throughout the city during these times of financial stress.

	<i>Signature</i>	<i>Address</i>
1)		401 S. UNION STREET
2)	Sally G. Falatko	304 Duke Street
3)		304 DUKE STREET
4)	Andrew H. Macdonald	513 ROBINSON CT - 22302
5)	Edw. Brubaker	525 S. Lee
6)		525 S. Lee
7)	John E. Kennahan	302 S. Lee St. 22314
8)	Eric H. Kennahan	302 S. Lee St 22314
9)	Marlene D. March	412 S. Lee St. 22314
10)		412 S. Lee St 22314
11)		125 Duke St 22314
12)	Marie Kux	125 Duke St 22314
13)		207 South Lee St 22314
14)		107 S. Lee St 22314
15)		137 1/2 S. Fawcett
16)		137 1/2 S. Fawcett
17)	Susan Joseph	211 Prince St
18)	Robert Joseph	"
19)	Yvonne C. Alford	209 Prince St.
20)	Jane Timmerman	116 WOLF ST.

Windmill Hill Park

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	Signature	Address
1)	Donald W. Keph	507 South Union St.
2)	Mary E. Wespriem	124 Waterford Pl. Alex.
3)	Robert Sloan	101 Wolfe St
4)	John O. Tamm	119 Wolfe St.
5)	Bill Pison	119 Wolfe Street
6)	Ruth Drey	125 Wolfe St.
7)	Nina Dougherty	" "
8)	Robert W. Mc Carline	222 S. Fairfax St
9)	Susan Davis	220 S. Fairfax St
10)	Bob J.	211 Vreace St
11)	Francis J. R. Neff	104 Pommender Walk
12)	Gerard A. A.	104 Pommender Walk
13)		
14)		
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I believe we all regret that more time has to be given to this "amenity" issue.

On any day the Potomac overlook park (so-called Windmill Hill) is it's own best advertisement for effective multi-use - essentially **as is**. The playground and open spaces filled with families and younger children, the basketball courts often used as two simultaneous 1/2 courts, dog area separated to the east.

The present proposed revisions would cramp the open playground space with a volleyball court better left where it was. The dog area is now simple, removed and not impacting young children's playground access. Money will be saved implementing only the proposed minor changes such as Gibbon St sidewalk addition, crosswalks etc.

This city park works, and works very well – humanizing and adding to Alexandria's quality of city life.

Deborah Bigelow
Docket Item 5 April 12 03

DATE: APRIL 10, 2003

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JENNIFER HOLLINGS *Jennifer Hollings*

SUBJECT: WINDMILL HILL

I have lived on South Lee Street across from Windmill Hill Park for over forty years. As you all know this is a very well used playground. Just this afternoon a bevy of small children was at soccer practice near the basket ball court, while slightly bigger kids were honing their lacrosse skills to the north of them. Between them they spread out over all of the lower grass area

I now find that the latest of the Windmill Hill concept plans proposes to locate the volley ball court to the north of the basket ball court which, together with relocating the basket ball court, would curtail the open area by 98 feet. When you consider that much of the lower park is steeply sloped the end result would be the lamentable loss of about half the green space which is now available for impromptu ball games, kite flying, tag, frisbee and other important childhood pursuits. Moreover the proposed volley ball court would cramp the best sledding in Old Town.

I implore you to leave the open space unobstructed. Thank you.

Good ~~morning~~ Mayor, City Council and staff and fellow citizens. I'd like to thank CC for providing at long last the opportunity for citizens to view and comment on City Councils revisions to the January 2002 Recommended Concept Plan as shown in the document "Proposed Revisions to the WHP Concept Plan, February 26, 2003".

After 6 months of lengthy deliberation from July 2001 – January 2002 a city council appointed steering committee with city staff, city retained engineering consultants, some 22 persons not including the significant public input, a RCP was drafted addressing the criteria for improvement put forward by the CC and staff. All persons involved in the RCP effort understood they were working on the city's behalf contributing to resolve the parks future in a credible, democratic, community inspired process. The goal was to produce a document creating a comprehensive vision that allowed the city to begin the next steps in opening the water front at the old marine basin while making modest improvements to the existing features and activities within the park for all users to enjoy. Much rational, open fair dialog, conclusive matrixes and sketches on the criteria and objectives were included in the Steering Committee RCP to assist CC in understanding how decisions were arrived at.

While months were spent on the RCP the City Council's plan for the Proposed Revisions to the WHP Concept Plan simply lists the several revisions to be implemented, when they will be implemented and at what cost. There is no supporting rational or process of dialog for how these proposed revisions were reached.

Of the 12 revisions proposed 4 had been reviewed and rejected for several reasons by Steering committee, staff, consultants and public. They are as follows:

Revision # 3 Relocate and place the VB court adjacent to and just north of the BB court.

Revision #9 Improve the north end of WHP east of Union St to allow for safe dog access to the river from the existing ramp.

Revision # 11 Install pedestrian crosswalk across Union Street where the new pathway from the Wilkes street tunnel meets Union St...

Revision #12 Complete the construction of the new dog exercise area including fencing and landscaping.

I begin with:

Revision #3 – Combining Volley ball and Basket ball into an active recreational area was agreed by all participants on the SC not to be an necessary element. Reasons for not merging the two are:

1. 2 active ball sports interfering w/ one another's play.
2. Vball court sand on Bball court poses a serious surface danger to Bball players by manner of losing traction on sand.
 - a. Players retrieving errant balls from either activity will bring sand from the V Ball court to the B Ball court.
 - b. Children use the Vball court as a sand box. – though 30 feet away the Bball court will see sand piling up on it!

- c. Children in the sand box in now close to the BBall court are in danger of being hit by an errant B ball and needless to say in range of hearing the off color language of ball players!

The V Ball court since it is used more as a sand box is not a high activity zone. Given that, the appearance of active recreational uses being merged are not consistent with the true activities that occur on them. (see RCP p.5 - 2.3 & 3 & PA-11, #5)

Revision #9 Improve the north end of WHP east of Union St to allow for safe dog access to the river from the existing ramp. I had a couple of questions on this item. Attachment 6, p 5 notes it as temporary dog access to water and attachment 4D, p. 11 notes the image as the Interim Dog access to water. There is a circular point of land noted on your plan document "Proposed Revisions to the WHP Concept Plan, February 26,2003". Is that what will be ultimately implemented if approved?

I need to bring to your attention the error in this site's selection. Last spring Michelle Boggs and I met with Sandra Whitmore, Director of Parks and planning and were offered to choose dog water access point at Harborside or have no access at all; call it Rovers Choice. A difficult choice we believed since we know little about the tide effect there but knew dogs will go in the river but at least there was an access point. Shortly after this meeting Michelle Claire Eberwein and I were alerted to the water safety issues at this point of land by a Harbor side resident, SC member and Harborside Marina boat owner.

The marina and point of land proposed for the dog water access point is very close to the existing river channel where the current is swift and strong. This area is rarely affected by a lower water elevation with the outgoing tide. Boats leaving the Harborside marina need to accelerate full throttle to avoid being pulled down river into the floating dock with Gazebo. Because of the Robinson Terminal, the channel sweeps very close to the shoreline. In fact, an object can be swept away in the outgoing tide. I wanted to illustrate the danger at this point via video tape using a large object from this point but I couldn't get any volunteers perhaps there is some one here today that would volunteer for the test!

Moving along... You may recall the death of an individual in the summer of August 2001 when the victim tried to swim from this area. His body was found just north of Jones point. Tell me, do you dislike the dog issue this much that you plan on drowning the dogs!! Joke!! There used to be a yellow and black warning sign 15 ft from shore in this area. It was attached to one of the old pilings noting the danger of the strong current. Since the piling removal this sign has yet to be replaced. The SC concluded that this was not a good choice for kayakers and it is clearly a dangerous choice as well for Rover, Fido and Dioji.

The existing tidal flat in the existing dog park allows any individual be it dog, fowl, bird, human and child to walk out into the flats safely w/o worry of the channels current. This existing site is the most safe allowing dogs water access via a safe beach in WHP. Expending \$7000 for dog access when it exists naturally is not a good use of funding.

C. CURTIN
Email RE: River
CURRENT

-----Original Message-----

From: Windsor [mailto:wdemaine@comcast.net]

Sent: Thursday, March 06, 2003 2:25 PM

To: ccurtin1@comcast.net

Subject: FW: Your Proposed Alternate Plan for Windmill Hill Park

THIS EMAIL
WAS RECEIVED
AFTER 'ROVERS
CHOICE'.

From: Windsor <wdemaine@comcast.net>

Date: Sat, 18 May 2002 14:02:51 -0400

To: Claire Eberwein <eberweincouncil@comcast.net>

Cc: Kerry Donley <mayoralx@aol.com>, Bill Euille <wmeuille@wdeuille.com>, Bill Cleveland <billclev@comcast.net>, Joyce Woodson <council@joycewoodson.net>, David Speck <dspeck@aol.com>, Del Pepper <delpepper@aol.com>, Sandra Whitmore <sandra.whitmore@ci.alexandria.va.us>, Phil Sunderland <phil.sunderland@ci.alexandria.va.us>, William Conkey <bconkey00@yahoo.com>, "Palmieri, Andrew F." <afpalmieri@vssp.com>, Susan Anderson <sanderso@hdrinc.com>, Joyce Stevens <joyce.stevens1@att.net>, Elizabeth Jones <elizabeth.jones@ferc.fed.us>, andrew macdonald <ahmacdonald@his.com>, Bernard Schulz <bdschulz@aol.com>, Jack Sullivan <jsullivan@devassoc1.com>, Sandra Whitmore <sandra.whitmore@ci.alexandria.va.us>, William Skrabak <william.skrabak@ci.alexandria.va.us>, Jean Federico <jean.federico@ci.alexandria.va.us>, Windsor Demaine <wdemaine@comcast.net>, "Kilcullen, Peter" <PKilcullen@bellboyd.com>, Mark Feldheim <mark.feldheim@verizon.net>, Al Kalvaitis <Al.Kalvaitis@noaa.gov>, Joe Oliva <joliva@uspsog.gov>, Kit Leider <kitleider@comcast.net>, "Ellis, Rebecca" <REllis@wcsr.com>, Brian Buzzell <brian.buzzell@comcast.net>, Rob Odle <robert.odle@weil.com>, Van Van Fleet <vvanfleet@vmgthehill.com>, Sarita/Charles Schotta <schotta@erols.com>

Subject: Your Proposed Alternate Plan for Windmill Hill Park

Clair,

Forget clicking the @!*&X!! "attachments" and pour yourself a big cup of coffee. I've given up on getting PC's to read the application from my MAC. I've converted the attachment to straight e-mail.

Anyway, David Speck is convinced that someone is paying me by the word. It is 5 pages, in which I have taken the time to give examples as to why you might want to re-think the manner in which you present your ideas, rather than just issue blanket criticism. I have another life than Windmill Hill Park, but too much has been invested by too many to fade at the finish line. Please accept it in the spirit that is intended.

(The following is the attachment that I sent this AM)

Windsor

4/12/2003

Good Morning!

I never got around to telling you how much I enjoyed getting together with you for coffee and that clump of calories that we shared. I was surprised at the time when I got in my car.

I am disappointed, however, in my failing to make you feel comfortable with referencing those existing plans in your notebook that contain the features you wish to be given further consideration. It appears that you have chosen instead to go it on your own.

I am not out to squelch your ideas, but for you to use your office to elevate your personal preferences to an equal status as the task force report, and at the public's expense by further involving Baker & Associates, just sends the wrong message. Would not every member of Council have the right to follow the same course to enhance their suggestions? There is a huge difference between suggesting improvements, or "tweaking" as I call it, and positioning those suggestions as a completely separate plan to compete for consideration. I give you benefit of the doubt, in that you see this as simply a clearer presentation, but it has more baggage than that, and quite honestly smacks of arrogance.

My point is not one of being the least bit territorial, nor is it intended to be mean spirited. I share with you the desire to end up with the best plan possible, regardless of the source, but the looming question is, best in who's eyes? Anytime you ask someone's opinion, you run the risk of having to abide by it. City Council, via creation of the task force, asked the public's opinion and it's sitting on your desk in a white notebook.

Call me crazy, but competition between personal preferences, be it a member of the task force, or a member of City Council, was not my understanding of the reason given by Phil Sunderland in the ceasing of work on the Old Town Yacht Basin and Windmill Hill Park.

Yes, in a recent article you called for "additional public input...as long as the alternative is widely disseminated and we hear from all neighborhoods in the city". But Claire, that can not hold a candle to interactive dialogue over a period of many, many months, and an effort that employed the focus of a dozen or more intelligent, hand-picked people who sorted through a myriad of facts and diverse public concerns for nearly a full year! Those efforts resulted in a product a hiccup short of unanimous citizen support across the board. Of twelve issues, nine did receive a unanimous vote, two fell one short of that mark, and the third (the dog park) received a 5:3 approval. Why do you think that you can do any better?

I have spoken openly against those who perpetuate paranoia about predetermined agendas on behalf of city officials. To ask for a second wave of public response, when those from all corners of the city have already demonstrated interest enough to sit tirelessly through meetings in order to make their feelings known, sends a message that 'I (we) will keep asking until I (we) get the answers we want! Remember perception is often stronger than truth. What I'm hearing repeatedly is, "Why bother"...They aren't listening to the input they already have, so why do I think they will listen to mine" If you wanted to get the public's reaction first-hand, it would have been far better to have attended the ad hoc committee meetings at the Lee Center, or you can still torture yourself and view the videotapes.

You are not alone on Council in questioning the steering committee's work. Judging by David Speck's published comments, he feels that all the task force did was to 'move a few walkways and ask for some plantings'. But even if that were the case, that would only say

that the public is pretty happy with most aspects of the existing park and feel that it merely needs a face-lift and not a complete makeover. What is not apparent in the report is the exploration of seemingly endless alternatives, that often brought the task force full circle. We did not see a benefit to change for change sake.

You are obviously intelligent, but you are at a tremendous disadvantage in developing a concept in a relative vacuum. You've simply succumbed to a very natural impulse shared by all of us, the desire to be creative and see those ideas come into fruition. I spent a 30-year career with people giving me great ideas for television commercials at cocktail parties. That's fine, but it's not so much what you want to do, but how you are going about it.

I do not mean to imply a "take it, or leave it" attitude. I clearly understand that the role of the task force was to make a recommendation to Council, and not one of letting the inmates run the asylum. However, some of the recommendations were etched in Jello and others in granite in reflecting the degree of intensity in the public's preferences. You and other members of Council, as public servants, should know what those are, before substituting your own. Is that not fair? What seems to be missing is the opportunity for you, and other members of Council, to informally meet with the task force, or a representative group, before casting your vote, and be told of the public's reaction to those of your ideas that have been previously considered, I am not acting as a spokesperson for the steering committee, but let me give a couple of examples as to the type of benefit that might be derived by such a meeting.

Let's have a gazebo! As I recall, a gazebo was not a big issue, as long as it did not open the door for the consideration of restrooms. Everyone is grateful that you have eliminated that concern, and stated that yours is simply a shelter to protect school kids against inclement weather.

You plan, however, flies in the face of the concern by District 1 citizens about a growing problem with the existing gazebo next to the Harborside marina; mainly the increase in undesirable activity by teenagers and the homeless. The responsibility for policing yet another potential hangout may have not been the single turning point with the task force, but represents facts that should not fall through the cracks.

What about relocating where the dogs enter the water? To have the dogs enter the water off the point near Harborside, poses some problems that were presented by a career naval officer with considerable knowledge of the Potomac at the task force's water safety sub-committee meeting.

River Current!
You are obviously not aware that your recommended entry point has some of the strongest current along the park's waterfront, evidenced by the drowning last summer off the gazebo, not 20 yards away, and the eventual recovery of the body days later far down river. Yes, I recall you telling me of an incident when an owner had to retrieve his dog at the present dog park location, but I think that you just jumped from the frying pan into the fire. Because of Robinson's Terminal, the channel sweeps close to the shoreline, before turning abruptly eastward south of your point.

Any activity in the path of power boats leaving or entering the Harborside marina was also a concern of the task force's sub-committee. You fail to recognize in your alternative concept that the current forces boats to accelerate at full throttle to avoid hitting the gazebo as they are pulled down river. This was confirmed by several citizens, and one reason why the

kayak and canoe launch site was rejected at this site in an earlier plan under consideration. Is it any better to place Labs and Retrievers in harm's way? Don't think so.

By the way, I have no personal stake where the dog-park is located, but it is naive to think that any area where dogs are allowed to enter the water will not become an "unofficial" mini-dog park. Do you really think that dogs shaking water in every direction are going to be snapped immediately on leash? In all probability, you will end up with one very large dog park divided by Union Street. This is only my personal opinion, but I do not think that is your intention.

You and fellow council members should also throw into the mix, the importance to a surprising number of citizens about being able to fish off the gazebo platform that is immediately adjacent to the exact spot where you suggest that dogs take a dip.

I would also hope that someone would call attention to the fact that the "small point of land at the north end near Harborside" is currently an abandoned boat ramp that will be re-shaped, edged in rip rap and water plants, and become "Overlook Point". Regardless of the current surface, and its suitability for dogs, it will change, unless you intend to redesign that entire area. In that case, you would be altering both the physical characteristic and ambiance of a primary feature, (that incidentally originally called for a gazebo) in order to create another gazebo- enhanced area. One that offers a better view of traffic on the Woodrow Wilson bridge, than an uninterrupted panoramic view of the Capitol and Washington skyline.

"We had a lot of activity that is not necessarily compatible in one small area of the park"
You referred to mainly school children, dogs, kayakers and canoeists in the recent article, all of which was considered in the development of the task force's recommendation.

Briefly, the dog-park is almost exclusively used during times other than working hours. Simply driving by during the day will verify this. School children on field trips would be present only during school hours.

How about kids gathering water samples for research assignments conflicting with kayakers? Well, avid kayakers on the water safety sub-committee confirmed that the launch site would be used, with very rare exception, on weekends and non-working hours, with the greatest frequency during the summer months when schools are not in session. The task force felt that there was a desirable economy of use and space, rather than conflict, in being able to serve both groups with this single access to the water.

And finally, what about dogs vs. kayaks and canoes? Well, if you look closely, the kayak launch, shown on the concept plan, leads into an avenue bordered by pilings (the small dots) that serve two purposes: a safety-oriented controlled entry point into the river with appropriate warning signs, regarding channel traffic, and a precautionary screening that addresses your concerns, such as a stray dog. The kayakers and canoeists expressed no problem with the presence of dogs under any circumstances. Also remember the intensity of use by any of these groups. We are not talking about people standing in line at Disneyland.

As I said at the outset, I want these comments to be more constructive than derogatory. Jack Sullivan was obviously quicker to the point in expressing himself in his reaction to your departure. "We did our job and I think we did a good one". That job was not for the

steering committee to turn into park architects overnight, but to listen and respond to the citizens that we represented; the same citizens that you represent.

While this is copied to others, including members of City Council, I, nor the steering committee, have forgotten how well the concept plan for Windmill Hill Park was received by Council and the overwhelming majority the audience at the most recent public hearing.

Claire, it is discouraging enough, however, to learn that in light of this general acceptance, there is no source of funding. But to have months of work and citizen support disregarded and reduced to a self-imposed comparison with your personal preferences in nothing short of insulting.

I know that you and other members of council feel that there are few opportunities remaining to maximize one of the City's primary assets, the waterfront, but please keep in mind that it is the citizen's waterfront, not yours.

Joe Youcha made a very astute observation when I bumped into him the other day. He said, the problem is that no one sat down years ago and determined what the waterfront should include, and provided a checklist to serve as a guideline through the years of development. As it stands, Windmill Hill and Jones Point parks are the only remaining opportunities to play catch-up.

Thank you for your interest in reading this, and the time that you dedicate to serving. I just think that you strayed off course this time.

Windsor

Cathleen Curtin

From: Cathleen Curtin [CCurtin1@comcast.net]
Sent: Monday, March 10, 2003 10:52 AM
To: 'cmerck@comcast.net'
Subject: RE: W. Demaine note to C. Eberwein re: Windmill Hill Park

Carolyn,

After speaking with Lt. Crawford's office I was directed to the city's website 'press release' tab for info on the Harborside drowning. I was advised to also call Alex. Fire Rescue to understand the number and types of assists they have given on the river. I am waiting to hear back from them.

All best,
Cathleen

The press release text is as follows:

**MEDIA ADVISORY
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
AUGUST 10, 2001
6:00 P.M. CRAWFORD**

Alexandria Police Investigate an Apparent Drowning

This afternoon police responded to a location along the Potomac River, approximately 150 yards north of Jones Point, for the report of a man washed ashore. The man was transported to the Alexandria Hospital where he was pronounced dead.

Last night at approximately 9:16 p.m., police responded to the dock area at the dead end of Wolfe Street for a report of a victim drowning. Investigation revealed that three acquaintances, two adult males and one adult female, were fishing from the dock and later went for a swim. Two of the individuals managed to swim back to shore while the third individual was never located. Concerned for the safety of the missing man, police were called and an extensive search began with the assistance of the Alexandria Fire Department, Washington, D.C. Fire Department, Washington, D.C. Police Harbor Patrol, and a United States Park Police Helicopter. After several hours, police were unable to locate a body and the search was called off.

It is believed that the body retrieved from the Potomac shore today is the man that was missing from last night. The man's identity has not been established and the exact cause of death has not been determined pending the outcome of an autopsy.

For further details, please call the Public Information Office.

City of Alexandria, Virginia

5
4-12-03

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MAY 6, 2003
TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL
FROM: PHILIP SUNDERLAND, CITY MANAGER *PS*
SUBJECT: WINDMILL HILL PARK CONCEPT PLAN

Attached for your information is the final Windmill Hill Park Concept Plan that you approved on April 12, 2003.

Please note this plan does not include the pedestrian boardwalk along the waterfront east of the dog exercise area. That pedestrian boardwalk was a component of the concept plan recommended by the Windmill Hill Steering Committee in 2002, and was designed to separate pedestrians from dogs accessing the river. The recent plan you approved was based specifically on the concept plan approved by Council on May 28, 2002. The May 28 plan did not include such a pedestrian boardwalk since, with the dog park located on the west side of Union Street, there was no need for it.