

SEMINARY HILL ASSOCIATION INC.
805 QUAKER LANE
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22302
<http://www.seminaryhillassn.org>

September 16, 2002

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Ms. Rebecca L. Perry
Superintendent of Schools
Alexandria City Public Schools
2000 N. Beauregard Street
Alexandria, VA 22311

Dear Superintendent Perry:

Please find enclosed a resolution adopted by this association on September 12, 2002 regarding the proposed expansion/renewal of T.C. Williams High School.

Seminary Hill Association (SHA) encompasses all the residential neighborhoods whose properties abut T.C. Williams High School on the south side of King Street. We do not represent the owners of either the commercial or church properties located to the west of the school. Since late June, 2002 we - in collaboration with the owners of property adjoining the school and Chinquapin City Park have devoted considerable attention to the question of the renewal of T.C. Williams High School. We look forward to working with you as decision are made about the details of the school's location, size, configuration, and appearance as well as plans for its actual construction plans. SHA's T.C. Williams High School Task Force will remain operative until the renewal project is completed.

Should you have any questions, please contact me at 703-370-3089 or wdickin953@aol.com or the Chair of our Task Force, A. Melvin Miller at 703- 823-0284 or MIIMelvin@aol.com.

Sincerely


Bill Dickinson
President

Copies: Chair and members of the ACPS Board
The Mayor and members of City Council
Chair, Alexandria Planning Commission
Chair, Alexandria Parks and Recreation Commission

PROTECTING THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN ALEXANDRIA'S SEMINARY HILL
NEIGHBORHOOD SINCE 1952

T.C. Williams High School Expansion/Renewal

Resolution of the Seminary Hill Association Inc.

Adopted

September 12, 2002

The Seminary Hill Association Inc. (SHA), a civic organization representing the residents of a large geographic area in the West End of Alexandria is assessing the impact of the proposed expansion/renewal of the T.C. Williams High School (School) on the adjoining neighborhoods. These communities include Woods Place, Woods Ave., North Quaker Lane, Bishop Lane, Vicar Lane, Marshall Lane, Key Drive and Roan Lane.

In July 2002, SHA appointed a Task Force to develop a position for the SHA to present at the Alexandria Public School Board Public Hearing initially scheduled for September 19, 2002. This Task Force is chaired by A. Melvin Miller, a member of SHA. Other members include Lillian Patterson, Arminta Wood, Steve Harkness, Carter Flemming, David Mercer, Doris Ablard, Carol Lenhart, Arthur Peabody, Andrew Cariasco, and Tom Kerester. Although the hearings scheduled for September 19 have now been redesigned as a town meeting, SHA desires the Board and management of ACPS and other City leaders become aware of neighborhood concerns at the earliest opportunity. It is our hope that by recognizing these concerns, unnecessary delays in project planning and execution do not occur.

The Task Force was briefed on the School renewal option being considered by the ACPS Board by the Superintendent of Schools, her staff, consultants, and architects. We have also informally discussed the renewal plans with members of the School Board and other City officials. Most importantly Task Force members have met with residents of the neighborhoods whose homes directly abut the School. The following summarizes their and our major concerns:

1. The residents of the neighborhoods adjoining the School have always recognized the importance of the School to the community and have worked closely with the City and the School to develop understandings and working relationships that attempt to balance the needs of the School with the quality-of-life issues that are fundamental to the residents of its neighboring community.
2. The residents of the neighborhoods adjoining the School continue to confront a number of sound and visual challenges, such as:
 - A. The effect of school-based external sound systems that often disrupt conversations within the homes that abut the property;
 - B. Structural additions to the grounds (scoreboards, stands etc.) where little effort has been made to provide and maintain screening buffers; and

- C. The increased presence of non-school events using the facilities at inappropriate hours (loud speakers and starter's pistols before 9 AM on Sundays are now routine).
3. The residents of all the residential neighborhoods in this part of the City have also maintained a working relationship for several decades with each of Alexandria's four high schools (Episcopal, St. Stephens/Agnes, Bishop Ireton and T.C. Williams) to establish understandings that help achieve an appropriate balance on key quality-of-life issues in residential neighborhoods including:
 - A. No lighting of athletic facilities for evening events;
 - B. Careful management of magnified sound systems for outdoor events;
 - C. Guidelines for facility usage for outside events; and
 - D. Management of parking and traffic issues created by students, school vehicles, school employees, and other users of school facilities
 4. The residents of all the neighborhoods that border the School and Chinquapin Park are quite concerned that the current School design plan options do not demonstrate careful attention to the details necessary to integrate the physical needs of the School with critical other considerations involved in this special School/ Park common tract, including:
 - A. Public access and security,
 - B. Increased vehicular traffic,
 - C. The environmental impact of more concentrated School development on the Park and the surrounding neighborhoods.
 5. The residents of these neighborhoods recognize that there are many complex administrative, environmental and financial considerations involved in the siting decisions for the School's renewal, and as such, believe that it is more appropriate for affected neighborhoods to establish a limited number of guiding principles for development with respect to the School renovation rather than seek to articulate a collective opinion on each development option that might materialize in the deliberative process.

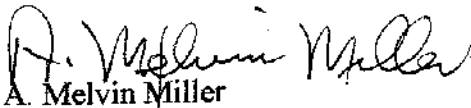
Therefore, Seminary Hill Association Inc. hereby commit to the following principles:

1. That no exterior athletic facility lighting be installed at the School to allow for any School or non-School night events since the addition of such lighting for School events would be inconsistent with decades of understandings that have existed within the neighborhood-School community on this matter. Such lighting would inevitably result in a dramatic escalation in the evening use of such facilities for School and non-School events, resulting in a totally unacceptable derogation in the quality of life to all residential neighborhoods adjoining the School.
2. That if the renovation plan for the School includes any structure, improvement or use that would affect privately owned property by sight, sound or otherwise (including,

any structure or improvement within 100 feet of privately owned residential property or any other structure with a material impact on such property), the renovation plan shall require that, prior to the completion of plan design, the City, the School and the Seminary Hill Association Inc. and/or affected property owners shall execute a Memorandum of Understanding that obligates the School to address any adverse impact of such structure, improvement or use on privately owned property through the establishment of appropriate visual and/or sound barriers or such other remedies as are mutually determined to be appropriate.

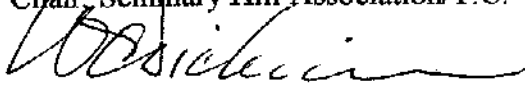
3. That since open space is a very valuable, necessary and increasingly limited commodity for the residents of the entire City, any renovation plan for the School that would intrude on existing open space must accommodate the creation of other open space of comparable value and quality for our City's residents.
4. That the residents of all neighborhoods represented by the Seminary Hill Association will work collectively to monitor all administrative processes related to the School renovation project and to advance solutions consistent with the terms of this resolution. These residents also reserve their right (individually or collectively) to pursue any procedural and/or legal remedy that might be necessary or appropriate.

Adopted by the Seminary Hill Association Inc. Board of Directors on September 12, 2002



A. Melvin Miller

Chair, Seminary Hill Association/T.C. Williams High School Task Force



William Dickinson

President, Seminary Hill Association Inc.