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**Gloria Sitton**

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**From:** Jackie Henderson  
**Sent:** Monday, May 14, 2012 8:38 AM  
**To:** Gloria Sitton  
**Subject:** FW: BSAP Testimony  
**Attachments:** Boyd on Beauregard.wps

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

From: Boyd Walker [mailto:boydwalker2012@gmail.com]  
Sent: Saturday, May 12, 2012 10:13 AM  
To: Jackie Henderson  
Subject: BSAP Testimony

Testimony for Today's Public Hearing on the BSAP.

Boyd Walker

Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.

George Santayana

Today we are faced with a major decision as to whether to create new neighborhoods, or preserve the old neighborhoods. Whether to risk what can be built by right, and considering each proposal individually, or whether to take at the developers and city's word that we are getting the right amenities at the right price. Especially when the price is the possible displacement of 10,000 Alexandria Citizens over a 30 year period. A new fire station I support. Should the city be building it, or do we get more if the developer does?

More Parks, I support. But buying back .8 acres from the developer for 1.5 million we got for 6 acres I do not. Is the proposed open space in the right place, or should more proposals from the citizens be considered, like consolidating already owned city lots with the purchase of new land. Is there adequate capacity in the sewer that runs along Holmes Run Parkway, with the amount of new development? It was not widened but only relined. Is there adequate capacity in our schools for 1000 new households, when we do not have enough space for 4 years olds waiting for Head Start Classroom space. This space is needed on the West End already. Our Schools will grow by 1600 kids regardless of additional houses in the next few years, according to a conversation I had with the superintendent yesterday.

I was moved by a recent letter to the editor that asked the simple question, would this plan be considered if it was in Rosemont, Del Ray, or Old Town. Of course it would not be considered. It can only be considered because it is an area largely of rental housing, whose residents did not all speak English as their first language. We are proposing a new neighborhood without truly saying what is wrong with the old neighborhood, but I have heard terms like the buildings are obsolete, or have outlived their usefulness, or coded words like we need to invest in new equity. It reminds me of a period of time 50 years ago when it was decided in Alexandria that many neighborhoods were blighted, and posed some sort of danger or threat. So what did we do, we tore them down. Who lived in these neighborhoods? They happened to be primarily African American from the DIP to the Berg.

We call it Urban Renewal, and many people still look back at it fondly. Working in the African American Community I have learned that they still call it Black Removal. So what should we call what is happening today? I have a suggestion: Latino Removal.

And why are we doing this? For the promise of upteenth tax dollars that will reduce the burden on residential taxes, when we are finally done paying off all the amenities and improvements that this plan will require. some foreseen, some

not, and it may help us not to have to raise taxes. But, again, if the past is any indication, any promise that it will reduce residential taxes is not going to happen.

Especially as it relies on a system of taking the new tax revenue and diverting it, like a stream, back into the amenities for the project including over 50,000 million for affordable housing. These are the problems of Tax increment financing, according to US Public Interest Research Group: They can fail to achieve the stated public objectives; enrich special interests at the public's expense; encourage development in areas where it is least needed; and it can lack transparency and accountability. What safeguards are in place to insure this is not the case on this project. I will include a link to the document and urge you to read it before passing this plan.

(<http://www.uspirg.org/tifreport>)

Lastly, I was driving up to the debate the other night, up Seminary, and dark storm clouds were engulfing the large building looming straight ahead that you can start to see as you go up the hill past Episcopal Seminary. And I thought, this is the perfect storm. Here I am from the East End headed straight into the most important debate on the West End. Now, I know jobs are good and BRAC has brought 6400 jobs to Alexandria. But it has also brought us an 80 million dollar ramp, I feel we must reject simply on the grounds that it is not cost effective, and not something Virginia Taxpayers should have to be paying for, because it would not be here if not for BRAC. It has brought us a 29-35 million dollar traffic circle called the ellipse that will only take the traffic from level F to Level D. Please, if you insist on passing this plan, give that 29 million to build affordable housing or build a school, and not to mitigate traffic.

And lastly, I can guarantee you this plan, which began in 2009, would not even be on the table if not for BRAC. It is new housing for BRAC employees, that is the market. It is time to admit that.

In a cost benefit by the city of Alexandria on the BRAC-133 project, it says that it will have a positive net impact on the community. It says being a center of commerce means "more jobs, greater economic activity, and lower taxes." We lost 60 million in taxes over a 20 year period on this building. "The fact that the BRAC site is near the Fairfax County and Arlington Borders means that fiscal and economic costs and benefits will be shared." (Pause, as this might elicit laughter from the audience) The Federal government might be able to fund a new fire station costs, it says. In Public Education portion of the analysis it says "This rather unique phenomenon in the Beauregard Corridor may actually result in lower school generation ratio," or of course, it may not. Other impact of city services would largely be related to the increase in residential units constructed in the City as a result of increased BRAC-133 employee demand for housing..." I am starting to see the picture. There should be no public safety costs associated with BRAC since it is a military facility, unless of course there is a catastrophic incident. I was interested also in the fact that one of the benefits is demand on hotel rooms (thanks ACVA). I will stop here with this sentence: "The BRAC-133 site will also positively influence residential real estate values and redevelopment in the Beauregard corridor." So there you have it, The reason for this BSAP is BRAC, and perhaps the reason BRAC was green lighted was so that this BSAP would move forward.

Boyd Walker  
1307 King St.  
Alexandria VA 22314  
703-732-7269