



ARLINGTON COUNTY
SPORTS
COMMISSION
2100 Clarendon Boulevard, Suite 414
Arlington, Virginia 22201



March 14, 2017

Mr. Charles Monfort, Chairman
Four Mile Run Valley Working Group
c/o Arlington County Board
2100 Clarendon Blvd., Suite 300
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Chairman Monfort,

The Arlington Sports Commission is an advisory body created by the County Board to serve as a conduit of information about sports and physical fitness programs among community organizations, the County government, and the Board. Among its functions, the Commission reports and makes recommendations to the Board on the adequacy, utilization of, and need for additional sports and physical fitness programs and facilities in Arlington.

This Commission hears regularly from our commissioners, who represent a wide range of sports activities, and from members of the public about the dire need for expanded indoor and outdoor fitness capacity in Arlington. Demand for such amenities is high, and the recent and projected growth in both the youth and adult population in Arlington places further pressures on existing capacity. We also hear regularly from the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) about the challenges it faces in meeting the varied and growing demands and unmet needs.

However, as Arlington residents engaged in the civic process, we are well aware of the competing demands for limited County land and limited undeveloped land. For several years, our Commission has advocated creative thinking when it comes to meeting these multiple demands. We appreciate your efforts to lead the Four Mile Run Valley (4MRV) Working Group as it seeks to recommend balanced and appropriate designs for the Park Master Plan and the overall Study Area.

I am writing to express the Commission's strong disappointment with the three concept drawings that were presented to the Working Group for the Park Master Plan at Jennie Dean Park. Jennie Dean Park currently houses an adult softball field, a youth baseball diamond, two tennis courts, and a basketball court. Each of the three concept drawings positioned one of these current sports-related amenities on the site of the WETA building. This property is not owned by the County nor are there are concrete plans for when or even whether WETA would sell this property to the County. Therefore, each of the three concept drawings would reduce sports-related capacity in Jennie Dean Park for an unknown period of time if not forever.

Further, the Commission is interested in adding new sports-related capacity to Jennie Dean Park. The Department of Parks and Recreation who oversees sports programming for Arlington County owns three building sites in the Park Planning Area to the west of Nelson Street. These sites offer a rare opportunity to add sports-related capacity, and many participants at the 4MRV visioning sessions expressed interest in adding such capacity to both the park and the overall study area. However, only one of the three

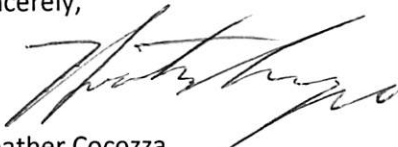
concept drawings clearly provides options for new sports-related capacity (drawing #3 shows an outdoor plaza that could include a bike or skate park, bocce court, and sand volleyball court). Drawing #2 shows an option for an arts and recreation building, but does not specify what activities might be included there. Arlington County needs additional indoor sport and fitness facilities.

The Sports Commission recognizes the difficult trade-offs that the Working Group faces as it moves forward. With that in mind, we would like to offer the following comments:

1. Any redesign of the Park Master Plan should, at a minimum, maintain all current sports-related amenities. We request that **at least one** of the three alternatives for the Park Master Plan show current sports-related amenities being accommodated in Phase 1, independent of any potential future acquisition of the WETA building.
2. Further, the Park Master Plan and the Study Area Plan should seek every opportunity to include meaningful additions to Arlington's inventory of indoor and outdoor sports-related capacity.
3. If any current amenity will be taken off-line and relocated, detailed phasing plans should be developed to ensure that such capacity will be replaced within 12-18 months OR new capacity should be built before existing capacity is removed. Further, the Working Group should consult with DPR to understand how any such decisions will affect programming within the overall County inventory of any affected amenities.
4. Final design concepts should, to the greatest extent feasible and practical, include flexible-use and multi-use spaces. This Commission and DPR should serve as resources to help the Working Group creatively identify and explore such opportunities.

We appreciate the Working Group's efforts to date and look forward to seeing the results of its design phase.

Sincerely,



Heather Coccozza
Chairman, Sports Commission

Cc: Caroline Haynes, 4MRV Working Group Vice-Chair
Robin Stompler, 4MRV Working Group Vice-Chair
John Vihstadt, County Board Liaison to the 4MRV Working Group
Christian Dorsey, County Board Liaison to the Sports Commission
Jane Rudolph, Director, Department of Parks and Recreation
Richard Tucker, CPHD Staff Liaison to the 4MRV Working Group