

## ***STAFFORD COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION***

***May 22, 2024***

The meeting of the Stafford County Planning Commission of Wednesday, May 22, 2024, was called to order at 6:04 PM by Chairman Steven Apicella in the Board of Supervisors Chambers of the George L. Gordon, Jr., Government Center.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Steven Apicella, Willie Shelton, Jr., Kristen Barnes, Carlos Bratton, Kelsey Caudill, Martin Martinez (remote/arrived @ 7:18 PM), Laura Sellers

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** None

**STAFF PRESENT:** Kathy Baker, Lauren Lucian, Stacie Stinnette, Evelyn Keith

### **DECLARATIONS OF DISQUALIFICATION**

Mr. Apicella: Mr. Martinez needs to participate by phone tonight. So is there a motion to authorize his remote participation?

Ms. Barnes: So moved.

Mr. Apicella: Is there a second second?

Mr. Shelton: Second.

Mr. Apicella: Okay, we'll just take a quick voice vote. All those in favor say aye.

All Commissioners: Aye.

Mr. Apicella: Opposed? Motion carries. Are there any declarations of disqualification? Alright, seeing none, are there any changes to the agenda? Okay, so I'm going to now open the Public Presentation portion of today's meeting. The public may have 3 minutes to comment on any matter except the three public hearing items on today's agenda. There'll be a separate comment period for each of those items as they come up. This is not an interactive conversation. Before starting your comments, please state your name and address. The clock starts when the green light appears. Yellow means there's 1 minute left. And red means your time is up. I believe we have some speaker cards so I'm going to start with this first. Okay, my first speaker is Peter Stencavage. I apologize if I don't pronounce folks' name correctly.

### **PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS**

Mr. Stencavage: Hi. I'm Peter Stencavage. I'm going to be speaking about Buc-ee's. What did I know? What did I know of loves austere and lonely offices? These words are from the poem "Those Winter Sundays" by Robert Hayden. Loves austere and lonely offices refer to the responsibilities of a parent as a kind of work. Sometimes it's lonely work. Sometimes it's hard and difficult. In some ways you Commissioners are like parents to Stafford citizens; you act in our best interests, hopefully, and for our future interests. Buc-ee's is not in our interest. They are not a community-oriented business. They will overwhelmingly bring in non-Stafford residents, not to mention traffic, noise, and pollution. Make the right choice for Stafford County's future. Say no to Buc-ee's. In the end Buc-ee's may say the right sweet nothings in your ears as if they were courting you. They will dot their i's and cross their t's, but in

*Planning Commission Minutes*  
*May 22, 2024*

your heart of hearts, is this really the type of non-community based business for Stafford County? I think not. Thank you.

Mr. Apicella: Thank you sir. Darla Stencavage.

Mrs. Stencavage: Darla Stencavage. I was listening to Blu, the Stafford County representative the other day, as Blu was telling me that Stafford County is a flourishing community that places its citizens first, ensuring that our heart never changes, our home is always welcoming, and our businesses continue to prosper. Blu guided me along a path that claim Stafford County was a community with a strong economy, usually ranking in the top 10 in the nation, and emphasizing the County's extremely low unemployment while calling the area a desirable location to live, work, and play. Blu pointed out that Stafford County parks and economic growth go hand in hand with parks being the most treasured or most cherished attractions. It made me wonder how Blu would be prepared to say that Stafford County is known for clean toilets and beaver nuggets. Furthermore, I wondered how Blu could explain how Stafford County's 2040 vision could really guide every decision when Buc-ee's contradicts six of the seven main goals of the vision. Let's look at how allowing Buc-ee's would go against each of these goals. The first goal, develop a multimodal infrastructure and transportation system. No, Buc-ee's would traffic... nightmare would actually impede the development of such a system. Two, engage in partnerships to provide quality educational and wellness opportunities. No, given the increased noise, light, and environmental pollution and increased emergency response times, it would hinder this goal, too. Number three, contribute to economic diversification. No, with three gas stations and numerous food and convenience stores already existing within a mile of the proposed site, Buc-ee's would not contribute to this goal. Four, contribute to growth management for community sustainability. Buc-ee's is not at all geared towards our community and would instead encumber existing community by taking businesses away from the nearby businesses and by lessening the walkability nature of the area. Add to the vision of a vibrant community through the arts, recreation, culture, history, and tourism, again, it's easy to see how Buc-ee's would not contribute to these. Even the tourism aspect of the proposed Buc-ee's does not meet this goal since Buc-ee's would not draw people to Stafford for Stafford's attributes, but instead draw people to Stafford as a place to drop their waste in once... one store's supposedly cleaned toilets. And finally, would Buc-ee's contribute to a dedicated and responsive Public Safety Team? I'd venture to again say no given the impact on the increased need for operations and the negative impact on response times. Consequently, I ask you to listen to Blu and keep Stafford an area that takes pride in its historic assets, proud of where we've come from, and proud of where we are headed. Thank you.

Mr. Apicella: Thank you, ma'am. Is there anyone else who would like to speak during the public presentations portion of today's meeting? Alright, see no one, I'm going to close the public presentations section and move on to the first agenda item, a public hearing on a conditional use permit to exceed the maximum height for Elementary School #18. Ms. Baker?

PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. CUP24155499; Conditional Use Permit – Stafford County Public Schools – Elementary School #18 – A request for a conditional use permit (CUP) to exceed the maximum height limitation with a height of up to fifty-seven (57) feet for an elementary school building in the A-1, Agricultural Zoning District on a portion of Tax Map Parcel No. 36-37B (Property). The request would allow the proposed elementary school building to exceed the maximum allowable height of thirty-five (35) feet in the A-1 Zoning District pursuant to Stafford County Code Sec. 28-38(d), "Exceptions to height regulations." The Property consists of approximately 34.7 acres,

***Planning Commission Minutes***  
***May 22, 2024***

and is located on the south side of Truslow Road, across from Summer Breeze Lane, within the Hartwood Election District. **(Time Limit: August 30, 2024)**

Ms. Baker: Yes, Mr. Chair, please recognize Evelyn Keith for the presentation.

Ms. Keith: Good evening, Mr. Chair and members of the Commission. I'm Evelyn Keith with the Department of Planning and Zoning. This conditional use permit is a request to exceed the maximum height limitation with a height of up to 57 feet for an elementary school building in the A-1, Agricultural zoning district. Stafford County... Stafford School Board is the applicant. The site is located on Tax Map 36-37B within the Hartwood District. Jeff Harvey will be representing the applicant this evening. The property is outlined in blue on the zoning map and is zoned A-1, Agricultural. The new elementary school is proposed on the east portion of the property. High School #6 is proposed on the west portion of the property. This would be the new elementary school. The site is located on the south side of Truslow Road across from the intersection of Summer Breeze Lane. Surrounding zoning districts are A-1 to the north and west; R-1, Suburban Residential to the east; and B-2, Urban Commercial to the south. The overall property consists of approximately 127 acres. The area for the elementary school site would be approximately 34.7 acres, which has been zoned A-1, Agricultural before 1978 and is not subject to proffers. This aerial view shows the existing conditions. The site is currently undeveloped and wooded. Falls Run perennial stream runs through the southern boundary of the property. Resource Protection Area is present on the site with 100-foot buffer located long Falls Run. Nearby uses include residential dwellings in the Willows neighborhood to the north, which is here; Cardinal Forest neighborhood to the east, just there; and other detached dwellings are located to the east, which is here; and undeveloped commercial properties lie to the south. This is a street view of the property along Truslow Road looking west. I hijacked that photo from the high school 6, so it may not be exactly accurate. This GDP depicts the proposed site layout for the new elementary school. High School 6 again will be west of Stafford Plaza Drive. The future extension of Stafford Plaza Drive will connect Truslow Road to Warrenton Road and provide access to both schools. The elementary school building is estimated to be around 131,000 square feet in size and designed to accommodate up to 1,070 students. Two entrances are proposed off of Stafford Plaza Drive into the elementary school site. A street buffer is proposed along Truslow Road and Stafford Plaza Drive. Transitional buffers are proposed to the south and east sides of the site, and existing trees will be preserved to the north and east sides of the site. A detailed landscape review occurs during site plan process, which is currently under review. The Comprehensive Plan compliance review was approved by the Planning Commission on March 8<sup>th</sup> of last year. This is a closer view of the site showing elevations and distances of the building to property lines. The red circles represent distances from the school building to property lines, and blue represents the building elevations. The overall plan shows an elevation of 348 feet at grade for the base of the school building. The increase in height of up to 57 feet at the roof access stairwell is an additional 22 feet from the maximum height of 35 feet permissible in the A-1 zoning district. And the 47-foot height of the three-story academic wing is 12 feet above the maximum height, which is the bulk of the building. The school building is proposed to be approximately 200 feet from Stafford Drive, 255 feet from Truslow Road, 100 feet to the closest residential property to the east, which would be here, and this is the distance from, from the school to the nearest property line, and 375 feet to the closest residential parcel in Cardinal Forest subdivision.

Mr. Apicella: Ms. Keith, can you go back one slide? The squiggly lines, I see a lot of squiggly lines. Is that tree canopy and tree cover?

Ms. Keith: That is the existing tree coverage, yes.

***Planning Commission Minutes***  
***May 22, 2024***

Mr. Apicella: Alright, thanks.

Ms. Keith: This is a bird's eye rendering of the school complex. The building will be faced with brick and include metal walls, wall panels, and numerous windows. Staff notes that the proposed building design conforms with several of the architectural guidelines of the Neighborhood Design Standards Plan. The Comprehensive Plan identifies the property as Suburban Future Land Use designation and within the Urban Services Area. The following are a few of the proposed conditions which will help offset any potential negative impacts. Development of the site shall occur generally as shown on the GDP; require the maximum height of the building be no greater than 47 feet, with the exception of the roof access stairwell no greater than 57 feet; require a minimum setback of 200 feet from Truslow Road, 100 feet from Stafford Plaza Drive, 100 feet from the property line of Tax Map 36-30-1, and a minimum of 350 feet from parcels in Cardinal Forest subdivision; and require mounted lights on the school building be no higher than 35 feet from ground level. Staff finds the positive features or aspects of this application are: the proposed use is generally consistent with land use recommendations in the Comprehensive Plan; the proposed increase in height will be mitigated by building setbacks, limitations on building lighting, building design features, and landscaping; and the proposed conditions will ensure any potential negative impacts are mitigated. And no apparent negative impacts are indicated. Staff is supportive of the project and recommends approval with conditions.

Mr. Apicella: Thank you, Ms. Keith. Questions for staff? Ms. Barnes?

Ms. Barnes: Ms. Keith, I noticed that Steven brought up the squiggly lines, I wonder if we could go back there. That's all native trees that are there now, and they are not going to be cut down. Is that correct?

Ms. Keith: From my understanding, some of them may be, and I could defer to the applicant...

Ms. Barnes: Okay.

Ms. Keith: ... but they will be preserving or retaining a good portion of those trees on the east side of the site.

Ms. Barnes: So a lot of times when we do a CUP, we'll actually put that in there as a condition as a minimum amount of feet that we have behind or as a buffer that will remain undisturbed so that those trees, we can make sure stay there in perpetuity so the folks that live behind on Truslow have that buffer. That's something I would like to see if, if, if the applicant is amenable to that.

Ms. Keith: I think that would be fine. We can we can add that condition just to ensure that they will not be removed in the future.

Mr. Apicella: Okay, other questions for staff? None? You did an awesome job, Ms. Keith. Thank you very much.

Ms. Keith: Oh, great, thank you.

Mr. Apicella: Would the applicant like to come forward? Welcome Mr. Harvey.

Mr. Harvey: Good evening, Chairman Apicella and Planning Commissioners. I'm Jeff Harvey with Legacy Engineering, presenting on behalf of Stafford County Public Schools. Ms. Keith did an excellent

job with the presentation, so I'll try not to be repetitive with my remarks. Just providing some background for this project. It's been identified in the County's Capital Improvements Plan and it's funded through 2027. The architectural designs have been completed. The project currently has a building permit application in before the County as well as site plan application. So the review is well underway. The three-story building would be 131,000 square feet and has a design capacity for 1,070 students. The property is currently zoned A-1, Agricultural, and the maximum height is, as Ms. Keith had mentioned, is 35 feet. The area shown in red on this diagram here is the... sorry for the blue pen... is the 35-foot high level. As Ms. Keith noted, the additional height is needed for the third story on the building as well as the stairwell chamber at the top of the building. I will note that the A-1, Agricultural zoning district is primarily a district that focuses on Agricultural and Residential uses. And I imagine that's probably why there's a maximum height of 35 feet. That's typically endemic to a two- or three-story house. In the Agricultural zones, you normally see barns and silos that are taller than 35 feet, and they're exempted under the County's zoning regulations for building height. One thing to note with Public Schools is they are a different type of construction than residential construction. Residential construction, you normally see ceiling heights between eight and 10 feet on each floor. Whereas with school construction, you're gonna see a taller ceiling height to accommodate drop-down ceilings, and also deeper floor widths for HVAC equipment and other types of equipment that are necessary for the design and build of the school. The County's Code Section 28-38(d) allows for exceptions to height limitations through the conditional use permit, and that's why we're here today. As Ms. Keith mentioned, we're needing a height exemption for 57 feet compared to the 35 feet that's the current code requirement. In preparing this application, we provided some sight line exhibits that are included in your package. These are excerpts from the sightline exhibits. They show some of the closest residential houses to the school building itself, this being the residential house and this being the school. And similarly here is a residence and then here is the school. As you can see, the existing vegetation will provide a significant screen between the residential and school buildings. We will note that and feel it's important to consider the additional height because three-story construction is much more efficient from a cost and constructability standpoint than either a single or a two-story building. And it's a new prototype for Stafford County Public Schools. The building height does not necessarily equate to the number of students in the school but, again, it adds for constructability and cost savings. And as mentioned earlier by Ms. Keith in showing the sight line exhibit, retaining existing vegetation can minimize visual impacts. I will note that a conditional use permit was approved for High School #6 on the adjoining property. And there's other examples of three-story schools that have been approved through a conditional use permit process in the County. They include Stafford High School, Moncure Elementary School, High School #6, and then also, in addition to tonight's hearing for Elementary School 18, Elementary School 19. Stafford County Public Schools believes that the proposed building height exception meets the standards of issuance for a conditional use permit. The additional height of the building will not change the character or pattern of development. This is currently contemplated as a school campus; it's been approved through the Comprehensive Plan Compliance Review process that this will be part of a school campus. The use is permitted by-right and will not adversely impact adjoining properties. The location and height of the building will not hinder development or value of adjacent properties. It will not adversely affect the health safety or, of the residents or nearby, of nearby residents or employees of the schools. It will not be detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to property improvements in the nearby neighborhood. And we believe it meets the intent and purpose of the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance. And part of the reason why we're here today is because of significant capacity problems in the elementary schools. There are, as you can see the chart in the middle of the page here, this is the growth projection chart that the schools have that's published online and also available in the CIP and other documents. And the red indicates where you're exceeding school capacity. So as you can see, we've got a lot of capacity concerns in the school system; in particular, in elementary schools. Virtually all elementary schools in the County either have or will be having shortly portable classrooms

***Planning Commission Minutes***  
***May 22, 2024***

or education cottages. And we have certain capacity issues; here are some existing pictures from Rocky Run Elementary School and Hartwood Elementary School where students are forced to, unfortunately, have class instruction in hallways and doorways. And I thank you for your consideration.

Mr. Apicella: Thank you, Mr. Harvey. Ms. Barnes, you have a question?

Ms. Barnes: So is this school, and this is a new design so it's three stories, is this school a little bit larger than our other elementary schools, either by square footage or by design standard?

Mr. Harvey: Ms. Barnes, I'll defer to the school division staff to speak to the design and capacity of the school compared to others.

Ms. Barnes: And it's because this has a third story that we're here today approving that height?

Mr. Towery: Yes, Chairman Apicella, Ms. Barnes. Yes, it is, it is larger than...

Mr. Apicella: I'm sorry. Can you just state your name?

Mr. Towery: Oh, yes. I'm sorry. Jason Towery with Stafford County Public Schools, Executive Director Facilities and Maintenance. Yes, this, this is a larger footprint. And the previous largest footprint that we've been working with so far was the one at Moncure; that was also three stories as well. So we've, we've breached the three-story threshold before, but the larger footprint is needed mainly to make sure that we're appropriately accommodating today's true educational requirements that we're, we're facing.

Ms. Barnes: Okay. And I did have one question from a constituent so I'll go ahead and ask it out. However, I have a feeling that somebody on my Commission is going to answer this one. Does the three stories with the smaller children create any difficulties with things like fire safety, getting out of the building, and things like that? That might go to Billy.

Mr. Shelton: I'll address that. In order to meet the State Fire Prevention Code, the County as well as anyone else has to meet that requirement of a fully sprinkled system as well as local alarm system. So it should be no degradation whatsoever.

Ms. Barnes: Thank you. That's all I have.

Mr. Apicella: Ms. Sellers?

Ms. Sellers: So with Moncure Elementary, that's not in a residential area. Correct?

Mr. Towery: Moncure is adjacent to, I can't remember the name of the neighborhood that's off to the left.

Unknown speaker: Perry Farms.

Mr. Towery: Perry Farms.

Ms. Sellers: No. Moncure Elementary is in North Stafford. It's by, umm...

Unknown speaker: Perry Farms.

***Planning Commission Minutes***  
***May 22, 2024***

Ms. Baker: It's Perry Farm.

Mr. Towery: Yeah, Perry. P-E-R-R-Y.

Ms. Sellers: What are there, like four houses back there? They're big lots. Right?

Mr. Towery: Those are good size, Suburban, R-1.

Ms. Sellers: And so that's one of the concerns is that this abuts right up to the that neighborhood. My other concern is, once again, we're getting a CUP for additional capacity without a transportation study on a site, and this is not a primary road, this is not a secondary road. This is a rural road with already high traffic volumes. And, you know, what are we going to do about that? So we're going to add additional students, additional buses, to Truslow Road. And what is, I mean, if it was by-right, that's one thing, but then to add additional capacity. What are the thoughts? Why, why don't we require this TIA?

Mr. Apicella: I'm just gonna... I appreciate what you're saying Ms. Sellers. I'm going to ask staff the scope of what's in front of us, since it's a height limitation issue, is transportation within the purview of the matter in front of us?

Ms. Baker: Not necessarily for height, no. This is just the impacts that we're looking at are what the height limitation would do, and not the capacity.

Ms. Sellers: But the height limitation is to accommodate an additional floor for more classrooms, for students.

Ms. Baker: But they could do it in a two-story building, and it would just not be as safe or efficient as the three-story. So there would likely be an elementary school on this property, regardless of the height if this didn't get approved.

Mr. Towery: I will just interject that, to your point, we did do a TIA analysis of the overall site as part of the High School 6 plans, which, of course this Commission, and we've talked through a few times. And there are, we, we know and we've been working with County staff, you know, issues along Truslow Road and that whole area through there. So I do know that the County staff and the Board are looking at the potential options out there. But I would... so we understand schools is an advocate of improvements to the local roads, we certainly would be supportive of that. So I'm happy to continue collaborating with the County to that end, so.

Ms. Sellers: And in this conditional use permit, and I didn't see it on your GDP, but are you guys giving conditions for right-of-way for road expansion along Truslow Road?

Mr. Towery: Yeah, so any... I don't think there was actually any requirement for right-of-way dedication on that section of Truslow, that particular area. We did, per VDOT's request, go through and do tree clearing along the 15-foot clear zone along through there, just to make sure that there's good visual through there, as well as safety for vehicles that, you know, could go off the road. Certainly, if VDOT were to come to us in the future and request some right-of-way out there, I think that would be something we would, you know, if it was for road improvements that are going to benefit the schools, I think we would definitely be open to something like that.

*Planning Commission Minutes*  
*May 22, 2024*

Ms. Sellers: So the difference is, is if VDOT comes later on, then they're gonna have to pay for it? Whereas at this process, if we negotiate it now in the CUP, then you guys, on your property, because it's to support your project can say, yes, here's the right-of-way. I mean, we wouldn't have to widen this road probably as soon if we weren't putting a high school and an elementary school on this road, because for the most part in that section, it's, it's relatively built out. So that would be, the idea here is that the schools would recognize that you guys are creating the need for this increase in capacity issue, and to be partners in this and just like we would do with any other, if you're a developer, we would have the same conversation of we need right-of-way, and dedicate that up front and say, when the road does get widened, and it does happen, the agreement is that it's already in contract, and VDOT's not going to have to go or the County's not going to have to go and get the, go through the the quick take process or the eminent domain process, that that's already been done.

Mr. Towery: So, sure, and I would, I would note, again, we haven't received any requests from VDOT or the County for right-of-way along that area. I think if there was something that they presented to us that showed, you know, perhaps a new alignment for Truslow or something, we would certainly be open to, I think considering that as part of perhaps a site plan process, I think would probably be where that would come up typically. But I don't think the County's figured out quite yet how they want to work on that section of the road, so. But we, I mean, again, we have been collaborating with County transportation staff, we've provided them with the TIA data and information, we provided them with all of the survey information, everything we have out there. Again, we're very supportive of improvements around the schools. So I don't foresee that being being an issue. But the point's taken. And again, if there was a specific request from VDOT, I think we would certainly consider. I don't know how to dedicate right-of-way without knowing what their actual need is. So that would be, you know.

Ms. Sellers: What I'm hearing is, once again, we have a conditional use permit for another, for an increase in capacity, we're going to add a thousand students to Truslow Road, a road that already is dangerous, where we already said we're going to put a high school with 3,000 students in it here to a road that can't handle the traffic already, without a transportation plan. So that's 4,000 students we're putting on a road that's already unsafe, with no transportation plan. That's a concern. So, and we should have thought of that before we put in for a conditional use permit for either of these schools, whether it's just for a height or not, these should have been concerns that were thought of before, but. I said it with high school, I'll say with elementary school, same same sentiment.

Mr. Apicella: Ms. Caudill?

Ms. Caudill: Hi, how are you? So my, I'm going back to the multi-level. Will there be any accessibility concerns with there being another level? Or has that already...?

Mr. Towery: No, we're actually installing two elevators in the school for the purpose of reliability, redundancy and emergency and access as well, so.

Ms. Caudill: Thank you, I appreciate it.

Mr. Apicella: Other questions for staff? I mean, I'm sorry, for the applicant? No? Thank you very much. Hold on for one second, though, because I think Ms. Keith has some potential language so I just want to be sure we're all on the same page and there's no concern about what the additional condition is.

Ms. Barnes: You had to know I was gonna ask about that.



***Planning Commission Minutes***  
***May 22, 2024***

Ms. Keith: I'm actually not complete with the language, I'm working on it. So if we can go to the next on the agenda and then I can swing back around and I'll have something for you. If that's okay.

Mr. Apicella: How long do you think it will take to get the language?

Ms. Keith: Probably like 10 minutes. I would actually like to run up to my office real quick while the other...

Ms. Baker: We do have a public hearing yet to open for this, this...

Mr. Apicella: Right.

Ms. Baker: Are you gonna open that now?

Ms. Keith: I mean, unless...

Mr. Apicella: Yeah.

Mr. Towery: I might be able to help out a little bit with this.

Ms. Keith: Yes, thank you.

Mr. Towery: We actually have some pictures of because we have timbered the property... let's see if I can get to the pictures. So this is... is there a better one? Okay. So you can get some picture, this is, this is the tree canopy that is going to remain between the existing residential homes and the ones along Cardinal Forest; thank you. So you can kind of get an idea. I was out there yesterday. It's a significant stand of trees at 30, 25-30-35-foot wide. I don't know what the exact dimensions are along there. So that's, and those trees aren't going anywhere. We have no intent of doing that and we're certainly welcome, we're willing to... *inaudible*.

Ms. Keith: Exactly. From my understanding, those are mature trees. I understand if you want to ensure that they will not be removed but they exist and they do run the whole east property line and they're mature trees. It's indicated on the GDP that they will be saved and preserved on this site.

Ms. Barnes: So could it be, could it be language as simple as the trees depicted on the GDP will remain?

Ms. Keith: I can. I was just trying to make it just a little bit fancy but I don't know if we can...

Mr. Towery: Yeah, I think we're, well, the trees as depicted on the GDP, generally depicted on the GDP.

Ms. Barnes: And then the trees being those squirmy lines. I mean, I don't know what, I don't know what the footage is, but if I lived in Cardinal Forest, and if I lived across the street on, on Truslow, I would want to make sure that those trees stay.

Mr. Towery: Yeah, the proposed tree canopy as shown, generally shown on the GDP shall remain. Something to that effect?

Ms. Barnes: Okay.

***Planning Commission Minutes***  
***May 22, 2024***

Mr. Towery: Limited disturbance here. Okay.

Ms. Keith: So the existing tree...

Mr. Towery: Canopy.

Ms. Keith: ... canopy shall remain...

Mr. Towery: As generally shown...

Ms. Barnes: As shown on the GDP.

Ms. Keith: ... as generally shown on the GDP shall remain...

Mr. Towery: Undisturbed.

Ms. Barnes: Undisturbed.

Ms. Baker: Evelyn, I think I would call it a tree line instead of the canopy, just canopies up here.

Ms. Keith: Are you maintaining the entire tree line? I just want to make sure.

Mr. Towery: Yeah, we don't...

Ms. Keith: I don't know how much you're gonna retain.

Mr. Towery: No. Yeah, we intend to retain that.

Ms. Keith: Okay. So the existing tree line, as generally shown on the GDP, shall remain?

Ms. Barnes: Shall remain intact? These are, I need, I need smarter minds than mine to write this.

Ms. Keith: I know. I'm looking over towards my team over there just to see if they can come up with another word.

Mr. Towery: Shall be retained.

Ms. Keith: Shall be retained.

Mr. Towery: There you go.

Ms. Barnes: Did that come from Mr. Harvey?

Mr. Towery: It did.

Ms. Barnes: Because he knows what he's doing. Okay. Is everybody else okay with that? Does that leave you with enough assurances that those trees will stay?

Mr. Apicella: I guess my only concern is, if there's a storm, some of those trees get knocked down...

***Planning Commission Minutes***  
***May 22, 2024***

Ms. Barnes: Right.

Mr. Apicella: ... what happens?

Ms. Barnes: But it doesn't say untouched, because that's usually what happens is, if it says untouched then no matter what happens in there, you can't go in. With this, it doesn't say that. It says that the tree line shall be maintained.

Ms. Keith: They are required to maintain the transitional buffer on the site. So in the event that there was any damage to the trees, they would have to replace it.

Ms. Barnes: Okay.

Ms. Keith: That's in the DSCL.

Mr. Towery: Yeah.

Ms. Keith: Yes.

Mr. Apicella: Okay, so I'm just gonna read it back. The existing tree line, as generally depicted on the GDP, shall be retained. Is that, that what we came up with?

Ms. Keith: That's what we came up with.

Mr. Apicella: Okay, thank you. Alright, I'm going to open the public hearing on this item. This is an opportunity for the public to comment. Before stating your views on this issue, please state your name and address. The clock starts when the green light appears. Yellow means there's one minute left. Red means your time is up. So if anyone would like to come forward, please do so now.

Dr. Chase: Hello, Dr. Sara Chase, Falmouth District, and I serve on the School Board. And I just want to say that we really, you know, it's sort of... we have an issue with incredible development in that area. We're looking at over 700 children coming into the Westlake area. And as you saw, the two nearest elementary schools, Rocky Run and Hartwood, are already over capacity. So we do need to be able to put children somewhere. And Elementary School 18 is our solution. So I hope you all will consider approving this conditional use permit. Thank you.

Mr. Apicella: Thank you. Anyone else?

Ms. Halstead: Hi, Alyssa Halstead. I am your Hartwood School Board representative. And so... this isn't on yet. Okay. Because I'll talk, that's the problem. So just a couple of corrections to, there's, so the design... *inaudible*... there's a lot of information that you'll need, like design capacity, program capacity, kind of differential there, but our high school is not 3,000. Some total is probably 3,000 students across the board. But if you're, you know, if you look at the totality, the sum totality of what's just coming, not just to the Westlake area, but also Centreport Parkway, there's approximately like 3,300 new homes that are coming. So we don't have any place for these kids to go. Elementary 18, Rocky Run already has six trailers. They're beyond, well beyond the capacity that they can handle. And I'm sure you're all familiar with Hartwood, the little elementary school that could. So there is an urgency here for Elementary School 18. And I believe that all of the Truslow Road residents came out early on. And I think that the School Board has done and the school staff has done an amazing job of trying to temper some of the

***Planning Commission Minutes***  
***May 22, 2024***

concerns there on that roadway. Unfortunately, Stafford's growing faster than most of its infrastructure, that includes transportation, that includes a lot of different things. So we're, we're hoping to help alleviate some of the burden that's on that side in our Hartwood area, to kind of get these kids better educational experience and the need for programmatically in our school systems, for our kids with special needs and whatnot to be able to have spaces for them, which is some of the stuff that Mr. Towery is alluding to, which is the need to have a separate room or a different place. And those are things that take up the space in our schools because our kids are, are, are much more – I don't want to say needy, but our kids have much bigger needs than we've ever had to really address in the past and this design will help that. That's all.

Mr. Apicella: Thank you. Anyone else? Alright, seeing no one else, I'm going to close the public hearing on this item and bring it back to the Commission. Mr. Shelton, this is in your district, how would you like to proceed?

Mr. Shelton: A motion, excuse me, to approve 24155499 for...

Ms. Barnes: Second.

Mr. Shelton: ... Elementary School 18 to go to the 57 feet. And with the additional condition of the existing tree line as generally depicted on the GDP shall be retained.

Mr. Apicella: Was that you? Who was seconding that?

Ms. Barnes: That was me. Yeah, second.

Mr. Apicella: Alright, Ms. Barnes. Alright, thank you, Mr. Shelton, Ms. Barnes. Any further comment, Mr. Shelton?

Mr. Shelton: No, sir.

Mr. Apicella: Ms. Barnes?

Ms. Barnes: Yeah. Just, just a couple of comments. I think we, I think that whenever we put something in the conditions to make sure that the trees stand there, I think we should now call it the Kristen Clause because I, I demand it in I think every application. I'm just saying. But so as I understand it, what we're, what we're doing here tonight is a CUP. And the reason for a CUP is to specifically mitigate for the impact of just having a higher roofline. And those mitigations are things like tree lines, line of sight things, and I believe that this CUP does mitigate for that, those, those challenges that you'll have with the taller school. When it comes to the transportation... I mean, I remember back when we approved the high, the high school, we all had a lot of, a lot of concerns about it, especially I did, Truslow Road. I would like to see a traffic circle there. I understand that that was something that was considered but I don't, I don't know where you stand on that. But that's not really what we're considering tonight, even though we've all really expressed some concerns about it. I'm sure you guys have the same concerns that we do. So I think our focus is very narrow here. We're looking at, at the conditions to mitigate the height. The rest of it's very, very valid, but I don't think that's what we're doing here tonight. So I will support this.

Mr. Apicella: Thank you, Ms. Barnes. Ms. Sellers?

*Planning Commission Minutes*  
*May 22, 2024*

Ms. Sellers: The Kristen Clause. You know, Bob Gibbons had funny things in Rock Hill, and so did Cord Sterling. So there's something with the Rock Hill District.

Ms. Barnes: It's the water.

Ms. Sellers: Yeah, the water out there. I will not be supporting this CUP. And I tend to differ in my opinion. You know, I've heard it over the years a lot like we have to put the children somewhere. And we put a lot of blame on planned neighborhoods, like Westlake or Embrey Mill, or Austin Ridge, or Augustine, or Liberty Knowles, planned neighborhoods that are large. But these are planned neighborhoods. What we don't talk about and what I rarely hear about, and I've talked about this for years now, is the number of developments that are occurring out Kings Highway. You know, why don't we ever hear the School Board talk about the children who are bused from King George County and spend an hour on the school bus? What about the little kid who gets up at four o'clock in the morning to go to kindergarten, to go to school. But we're going to build a school here on a road that is not safe. And we're going to do it because we got to put the kids somewhere. Somebody has to have these conversations. Somebody has to be willing to stand here and say, this is not a safe road, and whether we're talking about capacity, or whatever we're doing, we're going to use the processes that be to have the hard conversations. And usually that comes from the Garrisonville District, as I've said before, because we take this stuff seriously, because a predecessor on the Board did lose a daughter on one of these unsafe roads. And he made it very clear that it's not okay. So we do talk about it, and we do get reminded of it. And so as I said with the high school, I'll say with here – somebody's gonna get hurt on Truslow Road. And every adult who sat at the dais and did not talk about the transportation problems associated with these two schools, And we pretended like it wasn't a problem, And we said, oh, it's just a height issue, and we did not make it a serious conversation, will have responsibility. Because right now we can say, we need to wait, we need to talk about the transportation concerns. But when that child is hurt, or God forbid, that child loses their lives, we can't bring that child back. But today, we can wait a little bit, and we can have a hard conversation, an uncomfortable conversation. And so now you're here and you can hear it. Because if a child gets hurt on this road, and all of us are here to talk about it, it will be all of our faults. And I hear about it every month in Richmond, because this is something that is near and dear to the Commissioner's heart, the Commissioner of Highways heart, he talks about it every month, and the Secretary of Transportation. So if we're going to add capacity to this rural road cannot handle it, and we have not done our due diligence to do a proper transportation study, to actually have hard conversations and to think about the potential impacts, then shame on us. And when a child gets hurt, every adult who failed to do something about it and pause and think about it, is responsible. So no, I will not be supporting this.

Mr. Apicella: Thank you, Ms. Sellers. Anyone else? I just want to, again, go back to what's in front of us. Ms. Barnes kind of alluded to it. We operate within certain parameters, I appreciate the concerns raised by Ms. Sellers. If there were not an issue with the height, if it were 35 feet or below with the same capacity that's being proposed for this building, the CUP wouldn't be in front of us at all. So we wouldn't be having this conversation and there would be no application, there'd be no deliberation. So we have to operate within the parameters that are in front of us. Changing the height from 35 feet to up to 57 feet, there... I don't disagree that there are transportation issues associated with, with this road and the location of the school. But that, unfortunately, is not within the purview of the CUP matter in front of us. So, I will be supporting the motion. Alright, there's a motion to approve this matter. Please cast your vote. Mr. Martinez, how do you vote?

Mr. Martinez: Aye.

***Planning Commission Minutes***  
***May 22, 2024***

Mr. Apicella: Okay, so that motion carries 6 to 1 (*Ms. Sellers opposed*). Thank you for everyone's work on this. Moving on to the next agenda items, number two, which is a Comp Plan Compliance Review for Elementary School #19 and an associated conditional use permit to exceed the maximum height for Elementary School #19. I'm going to assume we're going to take those two together?

Ms. Baker: Yes.

Mr. Apicella: Thank you, Ms. Baker.

2. COM24155498; Comprehensive Plan Compliance Review – Stafford County Public Schools – Elementary School #19 – A request to review compliance with the Comprehensive Plan, in accordance with Virginia Code Sec. 15.2-2232, of a proposed public building or public structure, specifically a proposed elementary school, on Tax Map Parcel No. 39-76B (Property), located in the A-1, Agricultural Zoning District. The Property consists of approximately 89.64 acres and is located on the north side of Blackhawk Drive, approximately 1,000 feet west of Courthouse Road, within the Aquia Election District. **(Time Limit: July 21, 2024)**
3. CUP24155492; Conditional Use Permit – Stafford County Public Schools – Elementary School #19 – A request for a conditional use permit (CUP) to exceed the maximum height limitation with a height of up to fifty-seven (57) feet for an elementary school building in the A-1, Agricultural Zoning District on Tax Map Parcel No. 39-76B (Property). The request would allow the proposed elementary school building to exceed the maximum allowable height of thirty-five (35) feet in the A-1 Zoning District pursuant to Stafford County Code Sec. 28-38(d), “Exceptions to height regulations.” The Property consists of approximately 89.64 acres and is located on the north side of Blackhawk Drive, approximately 1,000 feet west of Courthouse Road, within the Aquia Election District. **(Time Limit: August 30, 2024)**

Ms. Baker: This is on right. Can you hear me? Okay. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, members of the Commission. Kathy Baker, Department of Planning and Zoning. So these are two requests. The first is to determine compliance with the Comprehensive Plan in accordance with State Code Section 15.2-2232 of a proposed public building. And the second item request would be to consider a conditional use permit to exceed the maximum height for a school building, just as you heard on the previous case. This property is 89 acres zoned A-1 on parcel 39-76B in the Aquia District. And this shows the existing conditions and the location of the property. It's on the west side of Courthouse Road, in between Spartan Drive and Black Hawk Drive. This parcel was previously two separate parcels, one for Stafford Middle School and one for Brooke Point High School, but it is now combined into one overall parcel. And the elementary school will be shown on the same parcel and be a campus style with all three facilities. I just want to point out these are your existing entrances to Brooke Point High School off of Black Hawk Drive. And Stafford Middle School has its primary entrances off of Spartan Drive. And there is a connector road that goes between Black Hawk and Spartan on the property. And you also note in the vicinity immediately around the school property are single-family homes to the north, east, and south. And immediately to the west is an open space area, part of the common area, and it does contain a transmission line. Zoning of the property is A-1, as are all of the adjacent properties. There is in the vicinity some A-2, Rural Residential neighborhoods and then there is across the stream on the west side some B-2, Urban Commercial and Office Use. This is the layout of the plan. The Brooke Point High School, as you see in this location, and this is the proposed elementary school on the same site. They will be sharing facilities. The parking areas would be used for both. However, they would have their own primary entrances into each school. The Black Hawk Drive again here and the connector road to the middle school. And then the various other amenities, the football stadium, soccer stadium, and then

*Planning Commission Minutes*  
*May 22, 2024*

various fields and courts to the left. When the elementary school is constructed, some of those fields and courts would, would, would change. This just gives you a little bit better view over an aerial; the existing aerial where you can see there will be some trees removed, and then the tennis courts, which you see underneath the proposed elementary school site. Some of the parking again will be reconfigured. There is an existing bus loop at the high school and that will be removed, and there will be parking in that place there. But the circulation to the high school will still be internal off of Black Hawk Drive. Just a note, this is the primary entrance to the elementary school, which is one of the existing entrances. So under the Comp Plan Compliance Review with the state code provision, it does state that the Comprehensive Plan shall control the general or approximate location, character, and extent of each feature shown on the plan. In this case, this, this elementary school is not currently shown. It does, the Comp Plan prohibits construction of public infrastructure that is not identified in the Comprehensive Plan, unless the Planning Commission approves that proposed infrastructure. And there are several policies that support the location of a school within the Urban Services Area. And this is where we're encouraging future public facilities to be located within the Urban Services Area. And...

Mr. Apicella: Go ahead, Ms. Sellers.

Ms. Sellers: Is there a water line out there?

Ms. Baker: There is water and sewer...

Ms. Sellers: There is water and sewer that goes out there?

Ms. Baker: ... serving both of the schools. There will be some changes to the sewer there. There's an existing pump station. And that is a project that is in process. And it's my understanding that the schools are going to build that and then be reimbursed by the, our Utilities Department, because that is an existing project that's identified already in their master plan.

Ms. Sellers: Oh, so they're just going to add it into the contract?

Ms. Baker: I don't know the stipulations or anything about the contract itself. But that's according to our Utilities Department.

Ms. Sellers: Okay.

Ms. Baker: We also have Policy 8.1.4 which addresses the siting of new schools, which include locating near existing and planned residential areas, locating proximate to other facilities, and also away from major transmission lines. I did note that there is a transmission line corridor to the western end of the school property. It is about 500 feet from the property line. And this just shows the Future Land Use in the Comprehensive Plan showing us Suburban and within the Urban Services Area. As far as the evaluation within the public facilities plan, it does estimate additional public facility needs in our Comprehensive Plan projecting growth through 2036. The plan shows that there is a need for six additional elementary schools by 2036. According to that plan, and there are two schools already should have been constructed, but we are behind. So this is the need that the schools are hoping to move forward with tonight. The transportation plan, there are no proposed or required improvements for this section of Courthouse Road. It has existing sufficient right-of-way. I just want to note the Comprehensive Plan policy does address traffic impacts from new development. It's not necessarily something that you would look at just for the location of the school from the design and location standpoint. There is no traffic impact analysis that was required with this application. However, there is a site plan that's being

***Planning Commission Minutes***  
***May 22, 2024***

reviewed already in process. And during the discussions with the Virginia Department of Transportation, the transportation impact analysis that was submitted to them raised some concerns about the backups on Black Hawk Drive out to Courthouse Road. Specifically, Black Hawk Drive already operates at a Level of Service F, which is failing, during the peak hours of the school. So it backs up as they're waiting to get out onto Courthouse Road. The elementary school, while adding traffic, the traffic will be offset, the hours will be offset. However, those, the delays will now be extended. So instead of just whether it's an hour of delay, you may now have two hours of delay due to those offsets of times. However, the schools are working on their internal traffic circulation that would ease these delays. I'm going to let them talk about it in a little bit more detail as they get into their presentation. But you all received some additional information regarding circulation of the traffic after the staff report was completed. And the applicant has indicated that the new traffic patterns, which includes utilizing that internal connector road between Spartan Lane and Black Hawk, which will help fully alleviate some of those backup concerns on Black Hawk Drive.

Ms. Barnes: Ms. Baker, is that, is that a connector road? Is it used now at all?

Ms. Baker: It is, it is used, but I'm not sure it's there for use.

Ms. Barnes: Right.

Ms. Baker: It's an open road, but it's...

Ms. Barnes: It's not consistently used for traffic patterns and pickup and drop off.

Ms. Baker: But again they can talk about that.

Ms. Barnes: So from now, that this is indicating that this opens up an entire new road for that purpose, which will create a lot of room to stack cars.

Ms. Baker: Again, I'm going to let their traffic engineer talk more about the circulation.

Ms. Barnes: I got the answer, thank you.

Ms. Sellers: *Inaudible, microphone not on.*

Ms. Baker: The internal connector road is not a VDOT maintained road. And again, we are recommending that they continue to work with VDOT who ultimately has to sign off on the site plan. So we do find that the proposal is consistent with the policies encouraging public facilities and, specifically, schools to be located within the Urban Services Area. And it's consistent with the school location policies, locating them near residential concentrations and two other public facilities, namely the other schools as well as public water and sewer. The proposed use would be appropriate in the Suburban Land Use designation. And the Public Facilities Plan identifies the need for this school to accommodate the current and projected growth. And we did just note as a negative the potential delays for time, but we do believe that new internal traffic patterns would mitigate this concern. So staff is recommending the Planning Commission find the request substantially in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan with proposed Resolution PCR24-11. I can take a break there if you want to talk about the Comp Plan or I can go right into the conditional use permit.

Mr. Apicella: Are there questions or can we move on to the next item and? Okay, great.



*Planning Commission Minutes*  
*May 22, 2024*

Ms. Baker: So with regard to the conditional use permit, this is pretty much the same request as the last one, as Elementary School 18 requesting to exceed the current height limit which is 35 feet in the A-1 zone up to 57 feet. The tallest point at 57 feet is that roof stairwell access, which is a fairly small limited area on the roof. The roof line itself, which where your academic wings and in the gymnasium are, are generally about 47 feet in height. And this is just the rendering. This is the elevation facing the parking lot, the eastern elevation that faces toward Courthouse Road. And you'll see the area of that roof stairwell access on this rendering. And just to give you a couple of the building elevations, so that you see from the front, again, the academic wing is about 46 and a half feet. The top of the gym is about 42 and then that roof access is 56.4. And this was the southern, southwestern elevation, which is the same and you can see the roof access point there with the academic wings and the, being about 46 and a half feet. And this was the sightline exhibit that shows from the Black Hawk Drive, the nearest residences along Black Hawk. The property itself does dip down in this area generally about 20 feet from where the residences are on Black Hawk Drive. So really, this sight line is showing that the school isn't going to look that tall from their vantage point and there will be some screening that will be supplemented along the tree line. And I'll show you that in just a moment. This is probably the area of the thinness tree coverage around the perimeter of the property. This is from Black Hawk Drive between two of the residences where there's an open space parcel, looking down into the general area where the school would be located. To the right is the view from the parking lot, the existing parking lot, in the general area where the elementary school will go. And that's looking toward Black Hawk Drive and one of the nearest residences.

Mr. Apicella: I'm sorry. So in one of these pictures, or in both of these pictures, is there a house and that's their viewshed from the house?

Ms. Baker: That's currently what it, what the viewshed is. That house that you see in the picture on the right, that is one of the houses up on Black Hawk Drive, so they're looking down. That's not necessarily the one that I'm, this is the view from Black Hawk Drive, this was from the edge of the pavement, looking down into the general area of the school site.

Mr. Apicella: Okay.

Ms. Baker: So this is the aerial view, again, with the plan overlaid on that. This is the closest point of the school to a property line, which is 70 feet. And the closest distance, this is the nearest home, which would be about 260 feet from that, the school building itself. The others to the south and southwest are about 390 feet from the school building at its closest point to the homes. The, this shows you the rendering of what the building would look like without trees and then with trees with a mature buffer. They will be retaining existing vegetation on 35 feet around the property line. And then the three areas where it's circled in red, that's where there will be supplemental plantings. So that area that was kind of sparse, that's one of the heavier concentrations of supplemental planting. For proposed conditions, again, this would be allowing the exception to the maximum height no greater than 48 feet with the exception of the roof access stairwell which would be no greater than 57 feet. And the building would be built in general location depicted on the site plan. The building would be located a minimum of 70 feet from the property line from adjacent tax map parcels as I showed on that previous slide. And the building mounted lights on the school building would be located no higher than 35 feet from ground level. The staff is recommending approval with the conditions as shown in Resolution R24-167. I'd be happy to answer questions.

Mr. Apicella: Thank you, Ms. Baker. Questions for staff? Ms. Barnes, you had a question?

***Planning Commission Minutes***  
***May 22, 2024***

Ms. Barnes: Going back to the the Comprehensive Plan review, well, anybody who has been paying attention knows that there was a lot of controversy with this. And there was a lot of back and forth between the School Board and the Board of Supervisors. But what is in front of us specifically, is whether or not is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, not whether we think it should have been in one place or the other. It's just is this consistent with the Comprehensive Plan? That's that's the scope.

Ms. Baker: The location of the school.

Ms. Barnes: Okay.

Ms. Baker: Consistent with the policies in the Comprehensive Plan.

Ms. Barnes: Okay, thank you.

Mr. Apicella: Other questions?

Ms. Sellers: And this doesn't go to the Board of Supervisors does it?

Ms. Baker: Not the...

Mr. Apicella: The CUP does.

Ms. Baker: The CUP, but not the Comprehensive Plan compliance.

Ms. Sellers: Why does it have to be a Comprehensive Plan compliant?

Ms. Baker: Because this particular school is not identified currently in the Comprehensive Plan. The other two, the Brooke Point and the middle school, as well as other schools, are already identified as existing locations. Most of our future schools do not have designated locations yet, as far as within the Comprehensive Plan. So what you're going to see, most likely with any of the schools that come along, we're gonna have to do a Comprehensive Plan Compliance, unless the school already knows those sites, and we build that into the next update of the Comp Plan.

Ms. Sellers: Okay.

Mr. Apicella: Mr. Shelton?

Mr. Shelton: Is this identical to ES 18?

Ms. Baker: Yes.

Mr. Shelton: Okay. So one other question, what's the dimensions of the roof stairwell?

Ms. Baker: I'll have to defer to the applicant or let me... you'd have, I'd have to take a few minutes to look at the plan.

Mr. Shelton: And of course my last question is it climatized and fully sprinkled?

Mr. Apicella: Mr. Martinez, this is in your district. Do you have any questions?

***Planning Commission Minutes***  
***May 22, 2024***

Mr. Martinez: No questions at this time.

Mr. Apicella: Alright, thank you. Any other questions for staff? Alright, seeing none, thank you, Ms. Baker. Would the applicant like to come forward?

Mr. Harvey: Again, good evening, Mr. Chairman, Commissioners. Jeff Harvey, speaking on behalf of Stafford County Public Schools. And since Ms. Baker did such a great presentation, I'll try to hit the highlights from mine. With Virginia... with the State Code 2232, again, focusing on what the language is, is that the Commission's charge is to look at the general location, or approximate location, character, and extent of a feature that's a public facility to see if it's substantially in accord with the Comprehensive Plan. I gave a lot of this in the background of the previous public hearings with regard to Elementary School 18; this is very similar. It's a project that's been identified in the County's Capital Improvements Plan. It's currently funded through 2027. The architectural designs and site plan are currently under review at the County. This would be a three-story building, and it would have a design capacity of 1,070 students. Part of this project includes reconstruction of practice fields, relocation of the Brooke Point High School tennis courts, and redesign and reconstruction of the high school parking area and bus loop to help improve access through the site. Also of significant note, too, is there's a new access road being constructed behind Brooke Point High School, which would connect to that inner-connection road between the high school and the middle school, which will help traffic flow significantly in the whole campus. This is an excerpt from the Comprehensive Plan. It's the chart that shows the projected needs for schools. As you can see in 2026, it says there was a cumulative need for three schools. To Ms. Baker's point, this chart demonstrates that there's a deficit of at least one school if you account for constructing Elementary School 18 and Elementary School 19. The goal of Chapter 5 with regard to schools says, ensure school capacity is capable of meeting the current level and expected increase in students from new residential development. As Mr. Towery said in the previous presentation, schools continue to grow. There's continuing demand on the school division to provide seats for students, and there's difficulty keeping up. There's portable trailers being used, and this would help alleviate some of that problem that's currently being experienced. With regard to meeting its goal, there's 10 policies in the Comprehensive Plan, and I'll focus on three of them. Policy 7 stipulates that the public school division will have to have identified the location of a new attendance zone per its policy, which it has. Since this has been identified in the CIP and this has been determined by the school division, this is where Elementary School 19 needs to be developed. The location reduces land cost since it's already owned by the county, excuse me, by Public Schools, and is an optimal location for shared bus services. In addition, compared to a raw land site, this is already a developed site. Again, there's tennis courts and playing fields in the area, it's already flat. So compared to other sites which haven't been developed yet, this will be much more cost effective to develop, because there's less land clearing and grading, there's access to public water and sewer utilities and other dry utilities that are already on the campus. And then also, the location of the clustering of schools allows for shared access to the athletic fields between this school, as well as Brooke Point and Stafford Middle School. And there are several examples of clustered schools throughout the County. It's been a long standing practice. We have a cluster with Rock Hill Elementary, Garrisonville Elementary, and AG Wright Middle School; Grafton Elementary and Dixon-Smith Middle School; Margaret Brent Elementary and Mountain View High School, which is seen in this image on on slide; and also as we've discussed earlier, High School 6 and Elementary School 18. They would... this site would be developed as a campus and utilize a shared infrastructure kind of what I described earlier about the playing fields, road access, sewer and water, stormwater management. But also there's benefits of a campus from the standpoint that some of the programs that are taught in schools can help aid one another. For instance, I understand the high school has a daycare program for some of the students, which can help out the elementary school. There can be opportunities for shared learning with music, athletics, and also mentoring. And also, as I mentioned earlier, it provides efficiency for

***Planning Commission Minutes***  
***May 22, 2024***

bus routes. Typically, your high school buses will also handle elementary school children. And as we talked about previously, they run on different timing and cycles. So there are efficiencies with having buses essentially serving the same area, serving more than one school. As Kathy talked about, there was concerns about traffic impacts, specifically the existing conditions we see at Black Hawk Drive and Courthouse Road with certain turning movements not having an acceptable level of service. And you'll find in most situations where you have a high school, that's pretty common. Not that saying it's great or desirable, but it's something that's not unheard of. And it's something that the school division is working towards. As you can see on this image, there's a proposed route plan, which would help to mitigate some of those concerns. Specifically with having the school buses for the elementary school go in and out the shared access road and come out Spartan Drive, as well as the high school student drop off come in and out of Spartan Drive. That will help reduce some of the delays we see at the intersections, excuse me, at that intersection between 70 and 75% of the current averages, it can reduce wait time from 17 to five minutes for the morning, wait times in the afternoon can be reduced from two and a half minutes to 40 seconds. And then also queues can reduce from 20 vehicles to seven. These are operational options that the school division is considering; it's not really something that's part of the Comprehensive Plan compliance process. But it's informative to let you know that the schools are actively trying to figure out ways to make the traffic situation better. As Mr. Towery mentioned, VDOT gave some recommendations of what can be done at that intersection of Courthouse Road and Black Hawk Drive, and the school division's currently studying that. It's going to require engineering design, which takes a while, and that engineering design will inform what the cost might be. And that will likely be another future request for a capital improvements project. From the school division perspective, there's many reasons to consider this new Elementary School 19 to be in substantial accord with the Comprehensive Plan. As shown earlier, earlier in the chart, there's an identified need for new elementary school. There's a funding commitment in the CIP. The school division's already selected the site for Elementary School 19, part of the criteria identified in Chapter 5 of the Comprehensive Plan. The site plan's under third review. The building design is the same as Elementary School 18 to help with cost savings, again, trying to meet the goals of the Comprehensive Plan. Clustering schools with shared infrastructure is a recommendation of the plan in Chapter 5. It's consistent with what we've seen the most recent campus with sharing High School 6 and High School... Elementary School 18 on the same campus. It's located on property that's already owned by the public school system, so there's no additional land acquisition needed. The site conditions minimize or reduce... *inaudible, equipment interference*. There's the efficiency of school bus routing. It's a convenient location if you're a parent, because if you have kids in multiple schools, whether it be elementary, middle, or high, you're going to the same campus to drop off and pick up those children. And also, the added bonus for students are that you can potentially spend your entire secondary education at one location on one campus. Again, as I had mentioned previously, there's significant school capacity problems, and this will help alleviate some of those issues. With regards to the conditional use permit, as Ms. Baker mentioned, we have the 35 feet compared to the 57 feet being requested and we covered a lot of this with the previous hearing with Elementary School 18 as this is the exact same condition. Ms. Baker mentioned we've prepared with this application sightline exhibits that show the existing tree lines. And I will note, with that image, it did show there were some areas where there was somewhat sparse vegetation. In addition to the tree buffer where it meets the County Code requirements, there will be additional supplemental evergreens planted with the idea that they can, if they're of the type that grows quickly, they can provide additional screening, especially in the winter months, because most of the tree line in that area is deciduous trees. So having evergreens can help with additional screening.

Mr. Apicella: Mr. Harvey, before you go on, what, what triggers that? Is it required or is it something that you're offering is as part of your site plan?

***Planning Commission Minutes***  
***May 22, 2024***

Mr. Harvey: Yes, it's, it's additional consideration with the site plan, in addition to what's required by the Code.

Mr. Apicella: Alright, thank you.

Mr. Harvey: As Ms. Baker mentioned that this is currently at a... the school site is at a lower elevation than Brooke Point High School and the surrounding nearby residences. With this graphic, it does show an interesting detail. This is Brooke Point High School right here. Brooke Point High School is classified as a one-story building, mainly because at the eastern end of the building where the main entrance is located, it's one story. But as Ms. Baker described, the land does slope down towards this elementary school site. And then the backside of the high school, it's actually three stories tall, as you can see in this image. So looking at the three stories associated with the new elementary school, it's in scale with the high school. And we already talked about, with the other presentation, about other projects that the school division has done where they've been granted a conditional use permit to exceed the height standards in an Agricultural zone.

Ms. Sellers: Go back to that picture. Is that like an actual picture of what you're gonna do here with these fields with Brooke Point? And there's an exit out of Brooke Point right there, correct?

Mr. Harvey: This is a architectural rendering of the completed condition, yes.

Ms. Sellers: And so, high school students get out at what, like 2:30? And they're going to, in theory, go out... How in the world are we going to maintain the safety here?

Mr. Harvey: Commissioner Sellers, the...

Ms. Sellers: There could be kids out on the playground.

Mr. Harvey: The playground area is located behind the building.

Ms. Sellers: Right.

Mr. Harvey: You kind of see a little bit of the, the, from the elementary school.

Ms. Sellers: Yeah, just thinking of like, putting like, you're putting what could be 18, 19 year olds walking back here. They would have access to a campus in proximity to children as young as five, going on a playground. Just that that multi-use, I mean, to me, have we, have we thought of that? And, like clustering like that, yeah, there's a lot of cost savings. But wow, when you see it kinda like this, it just brings up like, the uses of these and the mixing of these uses, it's just... To me, it's like, wow, these are two very different types of people, like these are basically adults, and these are not. And, you know, so I mean if, if these were two separate like land uses, we would require some sort of buffering between them, we wouldn't allow this mixture like, we wouldn't allow just this openness, like we would require some sort of transition, and we're just going to allow these children to, to co-mingle and mix. And to me from just if I put this in a land use world, I'd be like, I don't know if I want an 18 year old out here mixing with my five year old that I don't know, because, you know, not all 18 year olds or 16 year olds or 17 year olds... So I don't know. Just seeing this picture and thinking from a land use perspective, the two uses seem... just this picture, sorry.

Mr. Apicella: Ms. Barnes?

***Planning Commission Minutes***  
***May 22, 2024***

Ms. Barnes: So, in taking a look at that last one picture you had up, Mountain View, the parking lot of Mountain View, butts right up to the playground behind...

Unknown speaker: Margaret Brent.

Ms. Barnes: ... thank you, thank you... Margaret Brent. And I've been through there many times. So I think that's the situation that we've got right now.

Ms. Sellers: There's a transition area, there's a lot more space here than what's being proposed in that picture.

Ms. Barnes: Well, you can see that right there, the playground is right back there and there's there's a trail that goes around the edge of that at Margaret Brent, and that, and that's the student parking lot that literally butts right up against it, and the only thing that's in between them as a sidewalk. So I know that, that, I mean, has this, has this been an issue because you raise some valid concerns. So has it been an issue at Margaret Brent and Mountain View before? Maybe not something that Mr. Harvey could answer, but maybe something that the schools could answer because, you know, if that's a valid concern, let's take a look at historically or the precedent we've got with those two schools.

Mr. Towery: Yes, Chairman Apicella, members of the Planning Commission, Jason Towery with Stafford Schools. No, great question. I think that, certainly, whenever we have different types of student populations, potentially, and our mingling, that's always something that we think about. We did give a lot of thought and consideration to the orientation of the school, how we placed the the play fields, and so forth back there. And as well as, you know, just thinking through the logistics of scheduling with, you know, recess or other events going on, around or about the time that high school may may be getting out. I think the biggest potential, intermingling, if you will, or the closest that would come, we have a set of lower ball fields that are a couple, a couple of ball fields down that kids may be, you know, potentially there might be 15, 20 minutes of overlap between where the kids are playing in the lower ball fields down where the track is, if you're familiar with the Brooke Point campus, for, for coming out for practice, or marching band or other things of that nature. Generally speaking, during the day, the two schools are going to be on different schedules, right. So they're, in terms of when the students are arriving for the high school, they'll all begin in their classes, and then the students will come for the elementary, and then that process will reverse itself on the on the exiting end. So we don't see any, any real issues that I'm aware of, or that have come to our attention at the Margaret Brent/Mountain View situation, existing scenario that we work through every day, right now. And to, to the point earlier that Mr. Harvey made, it actually introduces some interesting dynamics, where, as Mr. Harvey pointed out, you know, the students, there's a whole program at Brooke Point High School for, oh, I'm gonna butcher this now, but basically for, for daycare and that... preschool, thank you. I'm sorry, you got me. Thank you. But helping students understand how to do that, you know, beyond high school, right. So high school students, there might even be some opportunities there for some, you know, exposure to being able to allow students to understand a little bit of that secondary school.

Ms. Barnes: I agree with Ms. Sellers. If I had a six year old little girl, I wouldn't want her exposed for any length of time to, to 17 year old boys. Not that there's anything wrong with 17 year old boys. But I mean, I can see that. That's, I remember, at middle school, I was very concerned about keeping the sixth graders away from the eighth graders because even that when you look at those two ages there's, there's, there's some innocence and some maturity that unsupervised, if there's any unsupervised mixing or even passing, you know, language, things like that, that you want to make sure that you really protect these, these younger ones from

***Planning Commission Minutes***  
***May 22, 2024***

Mr. Towery: Absolutely, and that's something we've talked through and ultimately is going to be operationally built into with the way the schools operate, right. So these two schools, when they're colocated, similar to with Stafford Middle, those two school administrations are constantly talking, working together, sharing information, making sure that, you know, if there is potential occurrences that they're avoiding that. And of course, there's always supervision with the kids when they're out on the playground.

Ms. Barnes: And historically at Margaret Brent, just to, just to, and Mountain View, there hasn't been a consistent behavior problem or exposure problem for, from the younger kids to those rather salty 17 year olds that think they know everything.

Mr. Towery: No, no.

Mr. Martinez: Mr. Chair?

Mr. Apicella: Mr. Martinez?

Mr. Martinez: Why not have the ball fields be the barrier between the elementary and the high school?

Mr. Towery: Another great question. You're, so the orientation of the high, or the elementary school is such that if we were to, if you will, turn it I guess you're suggesting potentially 90 degrees, we wouldn't be able to utilize the infrastructure effectively through there. One thing that was actually just pointed out to me, too, and I forgot about this, but if you're familiar with the Brooke Point campus, there's not only distance, but there's actually a tier. So I believe, so between the elementary school and then the lower fields, there's about 30-foot of drop. So it's, it's distance not only horizontally but vertically as well, so. There's a significant gap between those students' populations.

Mr. Apicella: Other questions? Mr. Shelton?

Mr. Shelton: So I'm assuming we're going to achieve economies of scale with 18, 19, then potentially 20, because you're going to same, use the same style standardization?

Mr. Towery: Yes.

Mr. Shelton: So you're not giving an architect another world to dream up?

Mr. Towery: Yes, although we love our architect friends, yes, this will, and already is saving us design fees.

Mr. Shelton: Thank you.

Mr. Towery: Yep.

Mr. Apicella: Anyone else?

Ms. Sellers: Where are these kids coming from?

Mr. Towery: So the attendance zones haven't been set yet. That, that's, uh, will be one of the next steps coming up. But I would imagine that, right, a lot of these students are going to be come from, coming

***Planning Commission Minutes***  
***May 22, 2024***

from out along the beyond Brooke Point area, right, because you've got Stafford Elementary a little bit further to the west there, that's going to be a more densely populated population, likely. But again, those attendance boundary zones have not been set yet. And that's something that the School Board will ultimately go through.

Ms. Sellers: So just to kind of bring to your attention that in the long term transportation plan that has been approved is to put the train tracks under some significant construction that may impact some of this, just to, just as a consideration that they're adding a third rail there. And doing, again, Leeland station is, in the Leeland area is getting a major facelift. I'm not really sure off the top of my head about the Brooke area, but it could impact some of the transportation zones here. But you know, this is just a tough scenario. I do think, obviously, this side is probably where it's needed. You got kids that are coming over that have to get bused across the highway and Route 1, so I understand that. It'll force some kids out of Park Ridge that go to Garrison Elementary where they could walk to school literally. And they don't, they get bused. So I understand the need. It's just kind of looking at this, it's like, wow, we don't have any other property in the area that we could put a school on that would be better?

Mr. Towery: Yeah, it was something that the School Board looked at very intently last year. And I think as, as they worked through it, one of the things that was a common phrase is, you know, land in Stafford is not as available as it was, you know, 15, 20 years ago. So that's, that's a consistent challenge. Certainly, this offered an opportunity to continue to move forward on the, on the timeline that the School Board and Board of Supervisors desired, but it also provided some opportunities from, you know, not having to purchase the land and having shared infrastructure and so forth, so. And it does put the school closer to a lot of the student population to your point earlier, students who are in more rural areas, right, so that will help to, you know, put, put the school building a little bit closer to those students as well, so.

Mr. Apicella: Ms. Barnes?

Ms. Barnes: I have quick question. Out of curiosity, when you're going to do the redistricting, are you going to do it 18 and 19 at the same... are you going to do them separately? You're going to just going to put all that pain into one nice, big... Best of luck. Thank you.

Mr. Towery: Yeah, one big painful redistrict.

Mr. Martinez: Mr. Chair, another follow up question if I may.

Mr. Apicella: Yes, please go ahead, Mr. Martinez.

Mr. Martinez: Why, why is there a sidewalk connecting the elementary school to the high school? What is it... why is it necessary to have a sidewalk?

Mr. Towery: So typically speaking, whenever we have a shared campus – I'm trying to get back to a good rendering of that – so you're referring to...

Mr. Martinez: The little curves, yeah.

Mr. Towery: ... this piece right here. So that's going to be, if you will, where our buses are going to be coming around and dropping off through this area, right. So you can imagine that that road goes behind there. So this will be the drop off zone. So that's access for the students to be able to walk up to the



***Planning Commission Minutes***  
***May 22, 2024***

school. But typically, when we have a shared campus, we do try to connect different, you know, pedestrian intermodal improvements like that.

Mr. Martinez: Sure. But these are shared campuses between age groups that are what, 10 years apart, right? I just, you know, is there a way to create some sort of distinct barrier that kind of prevents, like,,, *inaudible*... Commissioner Sellers. I, it's not an if, for me. I have a young daughter. And this raises a major concern for me. There needs to be a separation, at least in my opinion.

Ms. Caudill: Could you do something like Dixon-Smith and Grafton? I mean, I know that Dix... doesn't Dixon-Smith go all the way back and then Grafton comes right here? If I'm, if I'm remembering correctly, I think that's how it goes. It goes all the way back where there is that barrier between the two where they wouldn't be crossing.

Mr. Towery: Yeah.

Ms. Caudill: I mean, is there a way to do something like that?

Mr. Towery: Yeah, I mean, well, unfortunately, on this site, right, we are limited by topography and some of the other, other issues in terms of being access to utilities. So when you when you do create some of that separation, right, we're going to drive costs up for the actual development of the site itself. And obviously, we're, we're trying to be cost conscious here. I do think that as we've developed the site, let me see if I can get back to this previous picture. So the the actual high school site, although it obviously largely operates in a lot of this area, this, this area through here is going to be really where the high school parking for students and then this will be for staff, right. So the actual functioning area of the high school... I need a different color, is this red?... if you will... that is not red. It's not red, okay... if you will, the actual functioning area, the high school, in terms of the daily in and out operation is going to be here. This, this piece out here is really what is going to become the functionary of the elementary school. So it'll have its own dedicated entrance through here, and I'm sorry, it's getting a little busy here on this picture. It'll have its own dedicated entrance in and out in this area, the parking is separated, we have separate parking over here for staff, and visitors up through here. Separate entrances for the high school students to come in and out of over here. So we created that separation, I think, using some creative layouts here. But I think and maybe perhaps, you know, we could also take a look at, and I'll look to my architect over here as well, but perhaps a little bit of visual screening through here, with a little bit of landscaping that we could perhaps do through here to help create a little bit more of that buffer. We do want to be careful because we want it also as students pull up to the school and the buses for it to be welcoming, obviously, and open through there. But I think we could get a little creative there and take a look at that in the site plan process.

Mr. Apicella: So I appreciate the concerns raised by my staff, and I agree with those concerns. I want to bring us back though, to why we're here. We've got a Comp Plan Compliance Review in front of us, which basically is, is it a... could a high, could an elementary school go on this campus? That's the first question. And the second question is, whether or not we've mitigated the issues associated with an increase in the height from 35 feet to 57 feet. All the other issues, I think, are important. But I do think that they're, kind of like with transportation issues associated with the previous item, outside the scope of why we're here. So I'm going to kind of try to bring us back to the purpose for why we're here and ask if there any questions on those two items.

Ms. Sellers: Can you put the slide back up on the 2232 language? So the approximate character and extent thereof. So talking about the use of the land and how it's being done, would, how would that not

***Planning Commission Minutes***  
***May 22, 2024***

fall shown on the master plan as deemed; shall be constructed, established or authorized? Why? Why is everything we're talking about inconsistent with this Comp Plan discussion?

Mr. Apicella: I don't really understand your question.

Ms. Sellers: So you're saying that having this discussion of the proximity of these two buildings and these two uses is not within the scope of this.

Mr. Apicella: The question is whether a public school can go on this campus. There's already a public school on the campus. So now we're talking about another public school on this campus. So just from my vantage point, it's, the answer is obvious. The issue of whether or not or how the buildings or structure are where they sit on the campus, whether or not there are separation between the buildings, the type of students that are going to be going to these two different schools. I think that's to me personally that's outside the scope of the Planning Commission's Comp Plan Compliance Review. That's my opinion. If we can ask the, our counsel, what is the scope of our review with respect to a Comp Plan Compliance Review?

Ms. Lucian: The scope is as it said in the code provision, if you could put that back up for me, that'd be great. It's whether a school in this location would be substantially in accord with the Comprehensive Plan.

Ms. Caudill: A high school, is that right? A high school... *inaudible, being talked over.*

Mr. Apicella: Well, it's really a public school. It doesn't mat... in my opinion, is it doesn't matter whether it's an elementary school, a middle school, or high school. The question is...

Ms. Caudill: *Inaudible, talking over each other...* that I would disagree I think with that.

Mr. Apicella: Yeah, I appreciate that. Again, I think those are good, valid questions, but within the scope of the Planning Commission's review, as it relates to a Comp Plan Compliance Review, is whether or not a public school is appropriate for this site. And I, you know, I'm going to extend that to my other point, there's already a public school on the campus. So if there's already a public school on the campus, well, why would not another public school be appropriate for this campus?

Ms. Caudill: I would say another high school would be appropriate.

Mr. Apicella: I think that's...

Ms. Caudill: But I don't... *inaudible.*

Mr. Apicella: ... kind of a more granular view than, than what's in front of us. But that's, that's my view.

Ms. Caudill: Especially with this going to the Board. Because didn't you ask...

Ms. Sellers: And it doesn't... that...

Ms. Caudill: And it doesn't go to the board. So this is the... that's my concern.

***Planning Commission Minutes***  
***May 22, 2024***

Ms. Sellers: And we have a discrepancy. And the School Board and the Board of Supervisors are on separate pages. So we are now...

Mr. Apicella: That's, that's a political issue. That's not an issue. But we're not a political body. We're a planning body. And the question before us, again, whether or not a school is appropriate for this, another school is appropriate for this site, and whether or not the conditions that are proposed mitigate the impacts associated with a change in the height beyond what's authorized under the code.

Mr. Towery: Mr. Apicella, if I may, I would just add that the Board of Supervisors has seen this, yes, contentious has been. But they did vote to support funding the high school at this site. So from that standpoint, the Board has, the Board of Supervisors has considered and seen this, this matter before. I just wanted to make sure that was clear.

Ms. Barnes: So, and just, just to kind of piggyback off what you're saying, the Comprehensive Plan asks us, is this an appropriate place for a school? It doesn't ask us whether or not I think that's the best place for a school or if I think that's the best design for the school, or if I think that the traffic pattern is not right for the school. Those are all questions that are valid questions, but I don't, I don't think that they're within the scope here. That's just my opinion as well. This is just a, and this is sometimes where I think that it can get difficult because the Planning Commission has a very, very limited, very directed function with this. It's not whether or not I, you know, I think it should go on the backside of the property or the front side of the property or if it should have gone in Embrey Mill, or if it should have gone someplace else. It's just whether or not a school is, is an appropriate place in that area, according to the Comprehensive Plan. You may not think it's the best place, and I may not think it's the best place, but to me, it seems like it's very consistent, because there's already schools there.

Ms. Caudill: But I do agree that there should be a school there. I just don't agree that an elementary school. That's, that's my, that's my point. If I have constituents texting me right now saying how does that not matter, then that is...

Mr. Apicella: It's not a question of whether it does or does not matter. I don't think it doesn't matter. The question...

Ms. Caudill: *Inaudible, talking over each other...* then I just want to make that clear that it doesn't matter, obviously, if we put an elementary or a high school or because there's already a school there. So that's what you're telling me is it doesn't matter.

Mr. Apicella: No, what I'm, what I'm saying is, the issue of whether again, I'm going to kind of piggyback off of what Ms. Barnes said, it's not a question of what type of school it is. It's a question of whether or not a school in this area, if a school can go on this parcel. There's already a school on this parcel. It doesn't... from our vantage point, from, from our limited view, if we had an expanded view, I'd have a probably a different perspective. I don't disagree that I think having older kids and younger kids on the same campus this close, I would be concerned about it. But that is, that's, again, to me, that's a political decision outside the scope of the Planning Commission's charter.

Ms. Caudill: But if the political... eh, it doesn't matter.

Mr. Apicella: We're not, again, we're not a political party. Our role is only to decide...

Ms. Caudill: The Board of Supervisors is not gonna...

***Planning Commission Minutes***  
***May 22, 2024***

Mr. Apicella: ... within that limited, that statement that you saw, the 2232 review, whether a school on this site, whether a school can go on this site, and whether it's in compliance with the Comp Plan. Not whether it's an elementary school, a high school, or a middle school, just whether a school, another school, can go on the same site.

Ms. Sellers: Mr. Chairman, I think, I really think you're like putting words together to sound really well.

Mr. Apicella: I'm not... well, you're, you're...

Ms. Sellers: And I'm not gonna just, you know, I see where you're going and I respect it 100% what you're doing here, and, you know, stringing along words, but words matter. And in the Comp Plan, there's a high school there, and there's a middle school there. And right now, the thing before us is, is it appropriate to put an elementary school here, next to a school with a high school. And, you know, when you see the age difference of these, of these populations, and you see the behaviors and the behavioral differences of these children, you have to also take that into consideration. And that is in the Comp Plan. We've already approved and put this high school there. There's a use there, it's a current use. And so is it appropriate to put a new use with a bunch of little kids there? I don't know. And so I do think that part of that is you do have to get a little more granular, just like we would with everything else, whether you want to say no, we have to be, you know, we only get to say a school or not a school. No, it's never a school or not a school unless we want it to be a school or not a school. But, you know, we can string words along and we can make ourselves feel good doing it.

Mr. Apicella: I'm not trying to make myself feel good. I've done this several times. We had this conversation on a previous high school, whether or not it was appropriate or not appropriate. And ultimately, again, the question before us was whether a school, not a high school, was appropriate for that site in North Stafford. We can keep going around circular arguments.

Mr. Cramer: Excuse me, Mr. Chair?

Mr. Apicella: Yes, please.

Mr. Cramer: I'd like to introduce myself. I'm Jon Cramer, and I'm working with the design team on this project, and I'd like to say good evening, Mr. Chair and the rest of the Planning Commission. I hear your concerns. They're very valid. And I would also like to say in considering with the Planning Commission, when you approved the Comp Plan for High School 6, Elementary School 18, those two schools are right next to each other with the same concerns. With Mountain View and Margaret Brent, same situation. Now, today, knowing what we have learned from those schools, we have the ability as architects, designers to take that in consideration with how traffic patterns are around the campus. But also, can we look at screen options from the parking lot to the entrance to the school, how the high school flows, their students down to the field. What are those potentials for interactions between the both students populations? We can figure out ways to mitigate the interaction between these two grade levels. And that can be as simple as screening from the parking lots. Right now, you're correct; it's wide open. I've been in the parking lot a lot the past few months at Brooke Point and seen high school students. And they're very excited to get out of school. So you have to take that into consideration when students are leaving with their parents and interaction between that. And I think we can mitigate that with some screening between the two parking lots. But also, there's a huge... *inaudible*... difference from the elementary school site to the fields down below. It's actually more like 60 feet in difference. So that interaction of the high school students being around the perimeter of the students, they may be able to hear the students and see them down below, but it's not going to be a distance that we are today. You're

***Planning Commission Minutes***  
***May 22, 2024***

talking hundreds of feet of distance, the same amount at Mountain View and the same at High School 6 to Elementary School 18. There's going to be no difference. And also, I think there is a good potential to do some screenings around the rear of the school so that there is some additional screening for those kids.

Ms. Sellers: There's a road projected to go between Elementary School 18 and High School 6, right. Yes...

Mr. Cramer: There an access road...

Ms. Sellers: ... so no, these are not the same distance. There's a road design between those two schools.

Mr. Cramer: There's a road in between High School 6 and Elementary School 18, it's called Stafford Plaza Drive.

Ms. Sellers: Yes. There's not a road, there's a sidewalk between these two schools. There's a sidewalk connecting these two schools.

Mr. Cramer: And there's going to be sidewalks in between those two schools that they can go from school to school. And like the planning...

Ms. Barnes: No, I think there is a road, isn't there?

Ms. Sellers: There's not a road on that... *inaudible*.

Ms. Barnes: I think there's, there's a road and a sidewalk between. It did... there's nothing between Mountain View and Margaret Brent. I mean, there's the parking lot.

Mr. Cramer: You've got a parking lot and a playground.

Ms. Barnes: Yeah, there's a sidewalk and then there's the playground, yeah. So I think there is a road but you know, maybe... *inaudible*.

Mr. Cramer: There's essentially a road in between the fence and the playground and the parking lot in between those two schools. It's the same difference. And I can measure out those and give you those distances. What I'm saying is that in both scenarios, you have high schools, you have elementary schools on the same parcel of land doing the same thing today, operating. You asked the question, do you have any existing issues? Mr. Towery said no. We can do the same here and take into consideration the visual aspects of those sight lines. You have a lot more topography on this site than you have on those two sites. Actually, I could argue that's a better site because of the topography. Because the rear of the school, you will have no access from. Where the students get off and come into the school, that's actually a entry for the mechanical area and the service entrance. So it's not like it's the main entrance for the school right there. Where Brooke Point and the elementary school are, that's the service entrance and that's the high school. The main entrance is further away from that.

Ms. Sellers: There's more of those practice fields that are back there.

Mr. Cramer: And that's about 30 feet below. So if you can, there's no sight line. You would not be able to see down the field up at the students. And the students, today it's not planned for any landscaping

***Planning Commission Minutes***  
***May 22, 2024***

along that ridge, so you're correct. I think that's a great idea and a great potential to actually add some trees in that area to give some screen. So it's a valid concern. I think it's a great idea.

Ms. Sellers: Well, I would like to see some transitional buffer, just like we would do on any other, between uses. These are two completely...

Mr. Cramer: I agree.

Ms. Sellers: A high school is a different population, is a different use from an elementary school. They are different students, they are different grades. I mean, these are, these are different... high school kids are grown. They're bigger than probably all of us up here for the most part. And, you know, my...

Mr. Cramer: That interaction shouldn't be happening at the front of school. That's literally for pickup and drop off.

Ms. Sellers: But it's more of these kids playing on the playground, and the kids on the practice courts. And I hear the teenagers, I've got teenage nephews that just graduated from Brooke Point last week. And I know exactly what comes out of their mouth the minute they go on these courts. And I don't care if your teacher's out there or not, that sounds gonna go right up there to these five-year olds and they're gonna hear it. I know what comes out of those phones while they're playing on those courts.

Mr. Cramer: *Inaudible*... for some evergreens, some ever green buffer there. So the trees are there all year round will help with some of that.

Ms. Sellers: And so maybe, or just move those fields, but we... there has to be some sort of transitional buffer in order to make these uses to where...

Mr. Cramer: And maybe, operationally we tried to keep the students not on that second field that's right on the closest plateau. With the new field that we're constructing further out, maybe that's the field that we identify for those hours, where there's transition. So that's a good operational concern as well.

Ms. Sellers: I mean, there are former Supervisors who would have said, why don't we just build one big county complex of things?

Mr. Cramer: I agree, and also I'd like to state as well that currently we are in review for the building plan site plan. It's a tight schedule. We want to have students in the seat come August of '26. So same, same time line as 18. And literally, the clock is ticking.

Ms. Sellers: So this is a rubber stamp.

Ms. Caudill: Can I ask another question?

Mr. Apicella: Yes, please, Ms. Caudill.

Ms. Caudill: So I'm going away from the whole high school thing. Tell me about the traffic. Let's talk about traffic.

Mr. Cramer: Sure. So the tra...

***Planning Commission Minutes***  
***May 22, 2024***

Ms. Caudill: Just kind of tell, I mean, I know that we've gotten this and we've got the VDOT did their study in 2023. But I live off that road. So I know that it takes a very long time for me to even get to work. And I know it takes me a very long time to get home from work, so... on that road. So adding a thousand more students, how are we...?

Mr. Carmer: Currently today, all of that traffic comes through one entrance.

Ms. Caudill: Okay.

Mr. Cramer: So we're trying to offset that. So all the traffic, all the drop off and pickup for the riders will come through the middle school entrance, which is blocked off by a gate today. So there's no access currently today. So that's not happening. And this, these are operations that could actually happen today for Brooke Point if they wanted to, during this construction. So all that traffic will come off Black Hawk and go back around the middle school. That'll alleviate that traffic. And then with the new road that we will actually run around the back of the school, all the bus traffic for the new elementary school won't come through Black Hawk, it'll actually come through the back of the school. The buses will exit and come out Black Hawk, but were actually trying to do, keep the perimeter of the traffic. So it's not, everything's not coming through one access point.

Ms. Caudill: So will you have someone where the buses are directing traffic like they do in the mornings? Usually one person, if they're available or?

Mr. Cramer: Show me a school that doesn't have it today.

Ms. Caudill: Well, I mean, sometimes they don't have it. It just depends on who's there.

Ms. Barnes: No, I live on Courthouse and Colonial Forge; it's, they'll always have it. I mean, there's no, there's, there's a person that's actually assigned specifically to that. And, and to your point it, yeah, it's a pain. However, it is something that's kind of baked into our existence in Stafford. Everybody knows that if you're going to be on Courthouse at two o'clock, you better be prepared to stop. Or otherwise you just take a different way around. And that's, you know, like I said, that's kind of baked into the way we live in Stafford, unfortunately.

Ms. Caudill: I will stop my comments. Sorry.

Mr. Apicella: Thank you, Ms. Caudill. Any other questions for the applicant? Thank you, sir.

Mr. Cramer: Thank you.

Mr. Apicella: Okay, I'm going to open the public hearing on this item. Again, this is an opportunity for the public to share their views on, on these two items. Before starting your comments, please state your name and address. The clock starts when the green light appears. Yellow means there's 1 minute left. Red means your time is up. I do have one speaker card, Ms. Halstead.

Ms. Halstead: I'm back. Okay. Good evening. I already introduced myself. Do I need to do it again?

Mr. Apicella: Yes, actually you do.

***Planning Commission Minutes***  
***May 22, 2024***

Ms. Halstead: Okay. Okay. Good evening. I'm Alyssa Halstead. I am in the Hartwood District. I am the Hartwood District Representative on the School Board. I'm actually here tonight on behalf of our families and their children. It's not a secret that, to anyone, that this county and that our schools are overcrowded due to the significant growth that we keep experiencing. We have not caught up. It's also no secret that the overcrowding is causing issues, not just to the learning environment, but to the safety of our children every day. Every day that these schools are delayed is a risk we take; excuse me, it's a risk you're choosing to take with our students. The County's planning documents suggest schools be planned for replacement at 90% capacity. We're currently well over 100% in all of our, in most of our elementary schools. The trailer solution will soon be unavailable for this county in our system. We talked about transportation being dangerous and someone will get killed. Well every day on my mind is those kids leaving those trailers just have to go to the bathroom or holding it because those bathrooms don't, those trailers don't have bathrooms. That's kind of a disgrace for Stafford County. But we continue that. The School Board has done their part in selecting land for this school. Every issue that you have identified here we have discussed. We have all mothers on the School Board. Those concerns are being addressed and will be addressed. And as a mother of a 10-year-old with also a 20-year-old, I hear all your concerns. So, I assure you I will represent that in every discussion that we have about this school moving forward. The Board of Supervisors approved this land, fully funded Elementary School 19 at Brooke Point High School, period. Anything that came before it is inconsequential to this conversation. To be clear, currently the schools are on time and on budget. Words the parents in this county are anticipating, don't change for any reason at any time. The schools are now relying on the county to move forward with prudence. The parents have rightfully run out of patience with excuses, delays, and intended or unintended interference. Both Boards have conducted and executed with due diligence their part in the process to bring the school to our county on time and on budget. Any delays to this process rest solely in your lap, and will cost our taxpayers millions of dollars, and families unnecessary stress and anxiety. It is now upon this planning committee to act swiftly and urgently... sorry, to find this plan in compliance with the county's Comprehensive Plan. Every minute we delay puts the students in our care in danger – every minute. The school is ending tomorrow, so it's too late for me to ask you to go to one of our schools and see the conditions these kids learn under. Our hallways are our storage closets and our special needs kids are learning in the closet that they removed the supplies from. That's unacceptable. Classrooms have unmanageable student to teacher ratios and behavioral challenges with our children and no room to provide them a space is dangerous. Our children deserve new schools. Schools they've been promised for a long time that were never delivered. I'm not sure if any of you have children in schools now. I'm not even sure it's a prerequisite to understand the gravity of this. But I ask you to look into the eyes of any one of these children in Stafford County. Those are the lives that you're impacting if you were to delay this any further. They deserve better from all of us.

Mr. Apicella: Thank you. Anyone else like to come forward and speak on this item?

Ms. Randall: Good evening, my name is Susan Randall and I'm the George Washington District School Board member. I'm a resident of Stafford County for 50 years, as a student, as a parent, and as a teacher who opened Brooke Point High School when it was on a two-lane road. And it took over a decade for the County to even expand that to four lane roads. I also want to reiterate a couple of the things that I've heard you share as a concern. Definitely the distance between Mountain View High School and Margaret Brent is not going to be much different than this one here. I understand you... *inaudible*... but our high school kids get out at two o'clock, they do not get on the field at 2:01. These students in the elementary schools, they will be getting out at three. They do not come, they have to come back in the building, pack up their things before they leave. A very small window of difference for the outside elementary schools' kids and outside high school kids. Also, there is a preschool in Brooke Point High School. It's been there since I was a teacher there. And the children's outdoor play area is very close proximity to



***Planning Commission Minutes***  
***May 22, 2024***

the high school seniors outdoor lunch area. So, our high school kids, I used to when I was teaching there would take my kids to the high schools to do lessons. And the closest one, of course, was Stafford Elementary. My fourth-grade teacher then invited my kids to come and do lessons there. I would also say that my daughter attended four years at Mountain View High School. You have to remember also at Mountain View High School, they have walkers. And you have 100 or more walkers that walk on the sidewalk, next to the playground of the young children at Margaret Brent. And there's not that, and they walk all the way down to the stoplight every day. And that school has been in existence together for many, many years. So I share concern. Obviously, I raised three kids here. My daughter, like I said was a student at Mountain View. My sons were at Stafford High School. And yes, there is a large difference between kids. But safety is our number one concern. We have SROs and SPOs assigned, although we don't have them all hired because like everything they're hard to find. But we have them available at all the schools. And the time, if you look at the entrance for Brooke Point High School, in the diagram, it is behind the bus. Our kids are not entering at the same side, or the same entrance as the elementary schools will be entering. And again, they're separated by time in the morning. They're separated by time in the afternoon, where they won't be together. It works at Margaret Brent and Mountain View, there have been no problems. They literally drive by and walk around that playground every single day. And there's not an issue. They're right there up against the fence. And the kids are on the other side. They're students, they're doing and we have a lot of people to help with this. Thank you.

Mr. Apicella: Thank you. Is there anyone else? Alright, seeing no one else, I'm gonna close the public hearing on this item and bring it back to the Commission. Mr. Martinez, this is in your district. How would you like to proceed with the Comp Plan Compliance Review?

Mr. Martinez: This is item 2?

Mr. Apicella: Two.

Mr. Martinez: Two. Mr. Chair, I make a motion to approve resolution PCR24-11.

Mr. Shelton: Second.

Mr. Apicella: Okay, thank you, Mr. Martinez and Mr. Shelton. Any further comments, Mr. Martinez?

Mr. Martinez: Just a couple of comments. First off, Mr. Chair, thanks for the deference for letting me express some concerns that may have not been within the scope of the compliance review. That being said, Ms. Halstead and Ms. Randall, good to see you all again. Enjoy working with you on the Parks and Rec Commission as liaisons. As mothers, you've certainly alleviated any of my concerns, as well as the staff who've indicated that, you know, our concerns are being heard and they're going to be mitigated as much as possible so, I look forward to approving this resolution and to getting students into the seats and alleviating the pressure from the other schools. Thank you.

Mr. Apicella: Thank you, Mr. Martinez. Mr. Shelton?

Mr. Shelton: I want to commend Mr. Towery and the School Board for what you've done with the transportation part. I think that's commendable. You had a problem. You solved it. The architect says we can look at barriers and buffers. I think that's a win-win for all of us.

Mr. Apicella: Thank you, Mr. Shelton. Ms. Barnes?

*Planning Commission Minutes*  
*May 22, 2024*

Ms. Barnes: So, a couple of things to say. And again I just want to really articulate how hyper-focused we are on this. Is this a perfect plan? Probably not. But it is what we've got. This is not our decision on where this goes. It's not our decision whether it goes next to Brooke Point or if it goes in Embrey Mill. It's not our decision whether we like the way that the school looks or whether it's placed correctly. It's not our decision whether it's the best design or whatever the traffic pattern is. I'm really actually glad that we brought all that up, because maybe we gave them some ideas and some concerns that they could alleviate. I have a feeling that when, the Comp Plan won't get to the Board of Supervisors, but to see I think the CUP is going there so I'm sure you're going to probably hear all this again. And rightfully so, these are very valid concerns. But again, to me, we are hyper-focused on whether a school can go in that spot. To me, clearly, yes, because there are schools in that spot. And we also have this kind of combination between high school and elementary school in several places and in the 20 years that I've been here, and believe me, I used to go to the School Board meetings, I know all of the players, well, you know, as of 2019, not so much anymore and that was one thing I never and, I can't believe it, I'm surprised, I never heard of a problem between Mountain View and Margaret Brent, because that would be my first thing is, you know, what is my six year old daughter going to hear? Well, you know, it sounds to me like they did something right because otherwise, I guarantee you there would be parents in there every single Board meeting complaining how many F-bombs my six-year-old just heard. And as far as I can tell, that hasn't happened. It sounds to me like you guys have a plan. If the plan doesn't work, you're going to hear about it. And I know you're going to do something to change it. So, to me the hyper-focus of this is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and does the conditions for the CUP mitigate the height and to me, they both seem to be affirmative in that. Thank you.

Mr. Apicella: Thank you, Ms. Barnes. Ms. Sellers?

Ms. Sellers: I don't think it's a surprise, no, I'm not supporting it. It is a failing. Transportation that's not consistent with the Comp Plan. And there's that. I hear the mitigation, hey, we're mitigating it. No, mitigating it would be, let's talk about a stoplight. Mitigating it would be a letter from VDOT actually showing us some improvements. My other concern would be, and I did state this, would be how are we going to maintain these roads? How are we going to maintain this road there at Black Hawk Drive? How are you going to maintain that road School Board? Asphalt is expensive. And it's one of the most expensive things in transportation is maintaining a road. And now you're going to take that on. VDOT can barely maintain our roads because asphalt has become so expensive. And now you're going to maintain more roads? So that's going to be an interesting discussion when we get to that next year in the budget or when we open this school. I think the other thing is, is I do have concerns with mixing these uses without an actual buffer and transitional plan. I do think we need to spend some time discussing uses and the types of uses that we're putting together and having discussions and looking at, okay, where are these kids going to go. Because it's not a parking lot of kids just going to their cars trying to get home in the afternoon. It's kids going to the tennis courts. It's kids going to the fields. It's kids going to actually participate in sports. That's a different activity than going to your vehicle. And these kids are supposed to be there. Now we're introducing older children onto a campus where there are younger children. And I hear the SROs but we continue to put things on law enforcement every single day in this country. Every single day, we say we're just going to put it on the SROs. And you wonder why we can't recruit them, because they can't be here for everybody. That's not their role. So, we need to design things a little differently and look at it a little differently. So no, this is not compliant with the Comprehensive Plan, but I'll be in the minority and that's okay.

Mr. Apicella: Thank you. Any further comments? Alright, seeing none, please cast your vote on the motion recommending approval of the Comp Plan Compliance Review. Alright, that motion carries 5-

***Planning Commission Minutes***  
***May 22, 2024***

2 (*Ms. Sellers and Ms. Caudill opposed*). Moving on to item number 3. Mr. Martinez, how would you like to proceed on that one?

Mr. Martinez: Motion to approve Resolution R24-167.

Mr. Shelton: Second.

Mr. Apicella: Thank you, Mr. Martinez and Mr. Shelton. Any further comments Mr. Martinez?

Mr. Martinez: No further comment. Thank you.

Mr. Apicella: Mr. Shelton?

Mr. Shelton: No, sir.

Mr. Apicella: Anyone else? Alright, please cast your vote on the motion recommending approval of the CUP. Okay, have we...

Ms. Barnes: Nope, nope, nope. Go back. I hit the wrong button.

Ms. Lucian: Can you clear the vote?

Mr. Apicella: Okay, so, again on the motion recommending approval, the CUP. Please cast your vote. That motion carries 6 to 1 (*Ms. Sellers opposed*). Thank you everybody. Alright, moving on, there's no Unfinished Business. No New Business. Planning Director's Report.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

NONE

**NEW BUSINESS**

NONE

**PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

4. Project Pipeline Report (For Information Only)

5. Capital Construction Quarterly Report (For Information Only)

Ms. Baker: Mr. Chair, I don't have a report other than just noting that we have the Project Pipeline Report and the Capital Construction Quarterly Report just for your information in your packages.

Mr. Apicella: Ms. Baker, the pipeline report indicated that there's no public hearings on June 26<sup>th</sup>. To the extent there's no other business, can we consider cancelling that meeting?

Ms. Baker: You are correct. There are no public hearings that we are scheduling.

Mr. Apicella: Is there a motion to...

***Planning Commission Minutes***  
***May 22, 2024***

Mr. Shelton: Motion to cancel.

Mr. Apicella: Okay, is there a second?

Ms. Barnes: Second.

Mr. Apicella: Okay, there's been a motion and second to cancel the June 26, 2024 meeting. Just do that by voice vote. All those in favor say aye.

All Commissioners: Aye.

Mr. Apicella: Opposed? That motion carries. That meeting is hereby cancelled. County Attorney's Report.

**COUNTY ATTORNEY'S REPORT**

Ms. Lucian: Good evening Planning Commissioners. I have no report. Thank you.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Mr. Apicella: Thank you, Ms. Lucian. I have no Chairman's Report. Other Business – looks like there's some TRC meetings for Hartwood and the George Washington District. Those packages are available online. Last item on the agenda is approval of the minutes. Is there a motion to approve the April 24, 2024 minutes?

**OTHER BUSINESS**

6. New TRC Submissions

- [24155645](#); Sherwood on the River Sec 3 – Hartwood Election District
  - **\*\*Continuation of Project 21153942\*\*** A Construction Plan for 28 residential lots located south of Locksley Lane at the end of Kellan Drive on TM 33-2, zoned A-1, consisting of 229.47 acres, within the Hartwood Election District.
- [24155650](#); Kendallwood Reserve – George Washington Election District
  - A Construction Plan for creating eight (8) lots located on the east side of Matthew Lane on TM 54-144, zoned R-1, consisting of 5.5965 acres, within the George Washington Election District.
- [24155655](#); Robinson Farm – Hartwood Election District
  - A Subdivision Construction Plan for 10 3-acre lots located on the south side of Chriswood Lane on TM 27-48C, zoned A-1, consisting of 60.003 acres, within the Hartwood Election District.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

7. April 24, 2024 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

***Planning Commission Minutes***  
***May 22, 2024***

Ms. Barnes: So moved.

Mr. Shelton: Second.

Mr. Apicella: Okay, all those in favor say aye.

All Commissioners: Aye.

Mr. Apicella: Opposed? That motion carries. With no further business before the Commission we are hereby adjourned.

**ADJOURNMENT**

At 8:11 PM, Chairman Apicella adjourned the May 22, 2024, Stafford County Planning Commission meeting.