

Seminary Hill Association, Inc.
2115 Marlboro Drive
Alexandria, VA

12 December 2013

Mayor Euille and City Council Members
City of Alexandria
301 King Street
Alexandria, VA

Good Morning:

Item #8 on the City Council docket for this Saturday, 14 December, is a proposal to construct six tennis courts with lights on the T. C. Williams High School (TCW) campus. Both Seminary Hill Association, Inc. (SHA) and Seminary Civic Association, which represents the Woods Avenue neighborhood, support the construction of the tennis courts at TCW and support the continuation of the prohibition of lighting on any athletic fields, such as tennis courts and the football stadium. The Planning Commission concurred with our position on 3 December 2013 and approved the tennis courts but not the lights.

On 5 December 2013, the Alexandria City Public School (ACPS) School Board held a regular public meeting. During that meeting, Board members and the ACPS staff discussed strategy and next steps to get lights on the tennis courts (see transcript attached). SHA Board Members have great concerns about comments made during this discussion and bring the following to your immediate attention:

- SHA is disappointed that neither the School Board members nor the ACPS staff knew about the comprehensive negotiations with the community during the construction of the new TCW building (2002-2004) that resulted in the DSUP prohibiting lighting on the athletic fields nor about the fact the agreement directed them to meet regularly with a community group, the T. C. Williams Community Advisory Committee, that consists of the immediate neighbors to the west and south. (yellow highlights pages 2-6, 9);
- SHA was surprised to learn that the schools have no funds budgeted to pay for the lights but that members of the School Board and the ACPS staff “feel that I have the funds where I can run the conduits and the junction boxes.” (green highlights pages 4-7, 9, 10).
- SHA was dismayed to hear School Board members suggesting they could evade the City’s decision and put in conduits and junction boxes “just sort of slide this stuff in and call it trim. Some extra trim. . . . Just slide that sucker in, don’t say too much, and get it done.” (gray highlights pages 4, 8, 9)
- SHA appreciated hearing—multiple times—that the ACPS and T.C. Williams tennis team had no need for lights on the courts. The lights are for the general public who can use the courts after school hours. (blue highlights pages 2, 6)

- SHA regrets the gratuitous and personal insults of the School Board. (pink highlights pages 4, 5, 8, 9)

Given this additional information, we ask that City Council confirm the decision made by the Planning Commission and approve the construction of the proposed six tennis courts at T. C. Williams High School without lights or conduits or junction boxes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Nancy R. Jennings". The signature is written in a cursive style with a light blue highlight behind it.

Nancy R. Jennings
President, Seminary Hill Association, Inc.