

Subject: Construction Parking for Yorktown High School

Date: Monday, March 17, 2008 3:44 PM

Although Dr. Smith is away this week, I wanted to make sure you had as much information as possible as you review the situation vis-à-vis parking during the construction of the new Yorktown High School.

No decision has been made about a preferred site for off-street parking for the construction workers during the Yorktown project, and the Arlington Public Schools (APS) division has not applied for a use permit.

APS was required by the County Board to provide off-street parking as a condition for obtaining a building permit for the new construction. APS is exploring the possibility of using two parcels of land at the south side of Chestnut Hills Park to provide construction parking. Permission to use these parcels must be obtained from the County Board. APS staff members have presented this option at two public meetings to date, and are available to meet with civic associations or other groups of interested citizens to discuss this and other alternatives.

Prior to considering the Chestnut Hills site, thirteen other sites were evaluated. In the case of private properties, none of the owners granted permission for APS to lease the site. In the case of the public sites, only one would be available in time for the start of Yorktown construction. This site, the recess field at Williamsburg Middle School, is still under consideration. Use of the Williamsburg site would also require permission from the County Board.

The parcels proposed for construction parking on the south of Chestnut Hills Park are fenced separately from the playground area. In addition to the fence, the stand of mature trees on the playground side of the fence would remain, providing a buffer, as would the mature shrubs at the Harrison Street side of the parcels. APS proposes to erect additional fencing on the south side of the existing fence (north side of the proposed area), to provide a visual barrier between the playground and the proposed parking area. In addition, APS, if given approval, would be required to erect a 6' visual barrier between the side or rear lot lines of the three adjacent residences. APS proposes an 8' stockade fence, placed 25' from the lot lines. The parcels would not be paved, but would be covered with compacted gravel to minimize run-off and facilitate restoration of the grassy area following this temporary use.

The fence on the northern side of the proposed parking area would have a pedestrian gate at the corner nearest the high school. Construction workers moving to and from work would not pass through the "tot lot" area, nor even be in visual contact with this area. In addition, Yorktown construction workers, like other contractors on school sites, are required by Virginia law to certify that they have not been convicted of certain child abuse and other criminal convictions.

The construction parking area, wherever it is located, will be exclusively for cars, light trucks or small vans transporting employees. Heavy construction vehicles will deliver goods directly to the work site, via Yorktown Blvd. In general, construction workers arrive between 6:00 and 7:00 a.m., and depart around 3:00 p.m., outside the peak hours for traffic on Harrison Street. Exit from the parking area could be "left turn only" to avoid traffic through the neighborhood.

Design and construction of this lot are estimated to cost less than \$100,000. This would represent the total cost of parking for the duration of the project. If parking is placed anywhere else, a shuttle would be required to move workers from the parking location to the work site, changing a "park and walk"

option to "park and ride," increasing total vehicle miles. An estimate for the cost of a shuttle is under review. If a school bus were used to provide transportation, the cost would be about \$450,000. If monthly parking is available at Ballston, the cost is currently \$107/month/space. Parking costs at Ballston could be expected to total about \$480,000 over the life of the project, plus transportation.

Over the life of the project, the cost to Arlington taxpayers for construction parking at the Chestnut Hills site is estimated at about \$100,000; the cost for parking at Ballston, using a school bus to provide transportation, is estimated at about \$930,000, assuming parking and transportation costs do not rise over the life of the project.

Because the Chestnut Hills alternative is more convenient for the construction workers than other alternatives, APS believes that it will be well used, minimizing the likelihood of on-street parking in the nearby neighborhoods. Although the on-street parking spaces are "legal" public spaces, the Use Permit requires that construction workers be off-street. The general contractor would be required to ensure that construction employees are not parking on the street. Therefore, in order to minimize total contract cost, APS believes that convenient, and therefore well-utilized construction parking, will minimize parking management expenses to the general contractor, which will help minimize the total cost of the construction contract.

I hope this information helps clarify the situation. Any questions about the Yorktown project, including the search for off-street parking, can be directed to the project manager, Ms. Vaughan Olbrys, at EOlbrys@arlington.k12.va.us. In addition, progress on the project can be followed on the APS Design and Construction website, <http://www.apsva.us/1540108285711560/site/default.asp>.

Sincerely yours,
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