

## **Statement to the School Board on Yorktown High Design**

By David Haring, Yorktown Civic Association  
January 18, 2007

As president of the Yorktown Civic Association, I have the unpleasant task tonight of raining on this parade.

Our neighborhood fully supports the renovation of Yorktown High School. However, our membership has voted unanimously to oppose this design due to its serious shortage of parking.

Not only is the design seriously flawed, the process was flawed as well. Let me be very clear on this, at no point – not once - in over a year's worth of meetings was the parking challenge approached in a forthright or responsible fashion.

For most of a year, we heard "We'll deal with parking when the engineers finish the Traffic Impact Analysis."

Finally, in November here's what we got:

First, the BLPC was asked to vote on the parking recommendation without first seeing the full TIA report or any of its details. All the BLPC was given was a one-page memo before the vote.

Second, in referencing the County's zoning ordinance, major sections of the parking provisions were simply ignored, thus resulting in serious flaws in the staff's conclusions.

Third, if that wasn't bad enough, it also came to light that the traffic engineer was explicitly instructed to do an incomplete count of the parking at the school. How can a parking study – which we were told for months was going to answer everyone's parking questions – be of any value whatsoever if the total number of cars parked at the school would not be found anywhere in that report?

You don't need to take my word for this. It is spelled out in the superintendent's own words in a letter dated December 4.

Dr. Smith -- for whom we all have the utmost respect -- concluded in that same letter that it is now somehow OK to ignore the parking provisions of the 2002 master plan developed with the county for the site.

But here's the catch. There have been a number of other changes to the master plan, all of which either significantly increase the need for yet more parking or increase the building's footprint or both:

- The project now includes a new, much larger swimming pool.
- It has a black box theater
- There will be a new, larger set of gym facilities
- The building will have a big courtyard
- And Greenbrier Park will now include a total of 2400 bleacher seats

Based on these expansions in the plans and on our own counts of existing parking, in our judgment the bare minimum of parking that must be provided is 400 spaces. We have also identified options for structured parking that would be acceptable to residents – it is not often that you hear a neighborhood say that.

This project cannot move forward until the design addresses the parking need, but be assured that we remain committed to working with you to see this project through to a successful completion.

I would also like to point out 2 documents that I left at the desk. First, is the resolution recently passed by the civic association. Second, you should see a whitepaper which fully documents the master plan agreement on parking. On its last page, you will also see several photos of the serious parking situation that exists near the school today. We have consistently counted 190 cars or more parked in on-street spaces. This is simply an unacceptable situation that must be addressed as part of this project.