



FROM THE CITIZENS' PERSPECTIVE . . .

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE HUNTER MILL ROAD CORRIDOR

HMDL NEWS ALERT!!!!

Staff Denies.....Planning Commissioners Approve

Private Girls School Seeks Location on Hunter Mill Golf Park Property
Board of Supervisors public hearing for Oakcrest School - March 23 at 4:30 pm.
(Special Exception Application SE 2009- DR-008)

Oakcrest School, presently located on Balls Hill Road in McLean, proposes to relocate to the back 22 acres of the Hunter Mill golf driving range. It is a private school of general education for girls grades six through twelve.

Features of the application:

- Maximum daily enrollment of 450 students plus eighty-nine (89) staff
- Year- round operation with full academic terms, summer school and summer camp
- Operating hours from 7 am up to 11 pm Monday through Friday with Saturday and Sunday activities ending at 11pm and 5pm respectively
- Classes begin at 7:45 am
- Outside activities include tennis, softball and soccer
- Students and staff transportation predominantly single- occupancy vehicles with some arriving in carpools
- Minimal carpool transportation that is short term and has a modest vehicle trip reduction. No proposal for a busing plan

!! HMDL RECOMMENDATION AND CALL TO ACTION !!

RECOMMENDATION: Deny the current Oakcrest School application until the applicant has addressed the important concerns of Hunter Mill Road Community residents.

WHY SHOULD YOU CARE?

1. **Traffic.** Approval of this application as presently constituted will generate as much traffic as a zoning change from one home per two-acres to 12 homes per two-acres. That is more traffic than three neighboring subdivisions combined! Zoning changes of this magnitude have been denied by citizen task force, county staff, county planners and Supervisors for over three decades. They need to hear from you. The school can and should be required to reduce its trip generation. This is consistent with requirements levied on other schools like the Potomac School, which have been approved in the recent past. Additionally, the neighboring Fairfax Christian School busses a substantial portion of its students in, thereby reducing traffic congestion.

2. **The Domino Effect.** The school's location will make the remaining Golf Park parcels extremely unattractive to develop as-planned at current residential density levels; meaning the domino effect is likely to spur more special exception applications, zoning changes, higher density and associated traffic. Planning staff and at least one Planning Commissioner have warned of this. Impacting adjacent parcels ability to develop as planned is a violation of Comprehensive Plan and General Standards which calls for applications to be in harmony with the low residential development.

Call to Action:

We urge that you act and let the Supervisors know the impacts of this application have not been mitigated to bring it in compliance with the county's guidance on these matters. We recognize the Planning Commissioners and the Supervisors have a soft spot for schools and are trying to find a way to say yes. We like schools too, that is why we already have three schools in this area that were approved as special uses.

We agree with staff's recommendation to deny this application. We sincerely hope supervisors will follow what we feel is clearly-stated guidance in the existing county Comprehensive Plan with respect to this application. However, if it is in their intent to approve this application, we strongly urge the planning staff, Commissioner Donahue, and Dranesville Supervisor Foust and his staff to accept the community's recommendation for additional development conditions.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

1. **Contact Supervisor Foust and BOS: Support the planning staff's recommendation to deny the current Oakcrest School Application.** Email Supervisor John Foust at dranesville@fairfaxcounty.gov and send a copy to Board of Supervisors at ClerktotheBOS@fairfaxcounty.gov In the subject line state: Oakcrest School SE 2009-DR-008. Please email on Sunday so email reaches Supervisor Foust and the BOS on Monday morning. If you miss Sunday, please send on Monday before noon. Emails should be brief.
2. **Attend the March 23 BOS hearing.** The hearing is scheduled to beign at 4:30 pm and will be held in the Fairfax County Government Center Auditorium Boardroom - 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax. You do not have to testify, but your presence supports those who do.
3. **Testify.** Click on speaker's list at https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/bosclerk/speaker_bos.htm Or call the Clerk to the Board at 703 324-3151 to register. Or Email ClerktotheBOS@fairfaxcounty.gov If you plan to testify, contact Jody Bennett at 703 759 5712. Jody is the HMDL Land use Committee Chair and serves as liaison between the applicant, staff, and Supervisor Foust and his staff.

Additional Background Information:

County Staff Recommends Denial

County planning staff recommended denial of SE 2009-DR-008. The comprehensive plan guidance for this area includes the following key statement upon which

they relied:

Uses requiring special permit or special exception approval should be rigorously reviewed and permitted only when the use is of a size and scale that will not adversely impact adjacent land uses and the overall low density residential character of the area.

It further specifies that cumulative effects of special permits and special uses must be considered in the same vein.

Staff determined that the proposal is of a design and intensity that is not in conformance with the Comprehensive Plan guidance for this area. The proposal suffers from a preponderance of concerns related to traffic impacts, consolidation (downstream land use impacts on neighboring parcels), screening, lighting etc...

Staff detailed a number of development conditions that are recommended if it is the intent of the BOS to approve the application. The conditions address a variety of concerns including hours of operation, screening and buffering, lighting, parking, traffic improvements at Hunter Mill and Crowell, landscaping etc..

The Planning Commission Recommends Approval (with alterations)

The Planning Commission recommended to the BOS approval of the application last Thursday evening with some tightening of conditions in response to concerns expressed by residents and staff.

1. They specified that no entrance will be allowed from Crowell Rd, but only from Hunter Mill Road at approximately the same point the Golf Park entrance is at today. On Exiting, only a right turn will be allowed. This was to allow the berms on the north end of the property to remain, leaving sight lines unchanged for those on Crowell. It also removes the safety issue of an entrance near our famous 'Dead Man's Curve'. **We Endorse these development conditions.**
2. They specified that the intersection of Crowell and Hunter Mill Rd will be improved at the school's expense, and in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan guidance, as opposed to what the applicant submitted. The Commission removed any secondary alternatives from the development conditions. **We Endorse these development conditions.**
3. They tightened up the evening hours of operation a little.
4. They are accepting feedback aimed at tightening up the trips generated by the school prior to the Board of Supervisors hearing.

For additional information, call Jody at 703 759 5712. Jody Bennett serves as liaison between the applicant, the planning staff and community. Jody is also Chair of the HMDL Land Use Committee.

Preserve the Scenic and Historic Character of Your Community!

Share this e-mail with your friends - build the Hunter Mill E-community! HMDL needs a contact for every neighborhood in the corridor. Sign up – receive e-newsletters and be counted as a supporter of HMDL. Visit www.hmdl.org and click on Membership. See our privacy policy.

Volunteer - Choose the History, Transportation, Land Use, Environment, or Communications Committee. Visit www.hmdl.org and click on Volunteer.

The Hunter Mill Defense League (HMDL) is a community, non-profit organization in Fairfax County, Virginia, dedicated to preserving the scenic and historic character of the Hunter Mill Road Corridor. Contact info@hmdl.org with any questions or comments about this e-newsletter.