



September 15, 2021

Arlington County Board
2100 Clarendon Boulevard
Suite 300
Arlington, Virginia 22201

Arlington School Board
Syphax Education Center
2110 Washington Boulevard
Arlington, Virginia 22204

Re: Approval of Cardinal Stormwater Vault Project

Dear Chairpersons de Ferranti and Kanninen:

On behalf of Greater Westover's four civic associations (4CA) and the 4CA Torreyson Run Stormwater Task Force, we fully support approval of the plan, and proposed funding for, construction of the stormwater detention vault project at the Cardinal School site. As you know, we have been strong supporters of this project throughout its development because the current plan for the vault should reduce significantly the flooding risks for the Westover area as Arlington faces storm threats of greater frequency, higher rainfall volumes and increasing intensity in our neighborhoods.

We see the proposed plan for the detention vault at the Cardinal School playing fields as the right approach for our watershed on several levels:

> It is the right location in the watershed. The Cardinal School site is roughly half way along the primary pathway of the Torreyson watershed. This is an optimal situation because it assures that the vault will capture a significant amount of stormwater passing through the watershed before the volume of water can build up to volumes that are most destructive. The primary stormwater pipe for the watershed passes through the Cardinal site, which is also one of the few pieces of public land in the area. Importantly, the site is also immediately upgradient from the Westover business district, which means that the detention vault is able to deliver its greatest protection to Westover, a vital social and economic hub for our community.

> It is the right technological solution. A detention vault captures stormwater during peak rainfall events and then releases such water later, when the regular system is not overwhelmed by stormwater flow. Such an approach is effective at controlling localized flooding, but does not do so simply by transferring stormwater downstream, potentially shifting flooding risks to other parts of the County during the course of a storm.

> It is the right site for the detention vault. The detention vault will be built underground and thus is fully compatible with the historical and intended use of the playing fields (including the popular sledding hill.) The historical playing field use of the site has also meant that there have not been major issues concerning elimination of mature trees in the area where the vault will be constructed. Finally, the breadth of the fields has allowed the vault profile to achieve significant capacity with a broad, but not excessively deep, design. Such a design has allowed for a passive (gravity-based) flow pattern of stormwater through the vault, avoiding the operational and maintenance issues associated with water pumps.

> It is the right opportunity to construct the vault in a timely way. As you know, the Cardinal School site has been under construction for some time, and the County has been working with Arlington Public Schools to coordinate the planning, design and construction of the school and the detention vault. This has delivered a range of benefits for the project, including reliance on a common contractor with a thorough understanding of the site, coordination of work (e.g., Phase 1 modifications to the stormwater pipe occurring during school construction), a common set of deadlines, and alignment of technical reviews for the vault design.

We wish to recognize our neighbors who live adjacent to the site and will bear the brunt of the project. We know it will be uniquely unpleasant for them. They will be enduring much for the common good of our larger community. We ask that the County do all it can to ease the disruption for them.

We thank the Board members of both the County and Arlington Public Schools, as well as their respective staff representatives who have worked diligently and cooperatively with each other to keep the project on track. We have also appreciated the level of public communication and transparency that we have experienced in working with the people who have been leading this effort.

Sincerely,

Mark Greenwood, Chair, 4CA Torreyson Run Stormwater Task Force

Kathleen Trainor, President, Highland Park Overlee Knolls

Michael Weinstein, President, Leeway Overlee

John Ford, President, Tara Leeway Heights

Lilith Christiansen, President, Westover Village