

Proposed Resolution

The Rock Spring Civic Association is deeply concerned about the adequacy of the long, intermediate and short term planning process by which Arlington County Public Schools have been built, closed, re-purposed and rebuilt at existing and new locations without the capacity for permanent expansion despite periodic surges and decreases in the school-age population. This process threatens rapidly diminishing open and recreational space and costs taxpayers millions of dollars annually in excess construction and infrastructure expense.

School closings that occur should not preclude the possibility of future re-openings at minimal cost in response to demographic changes. Newly built schools should be engineered to permit on-site expansion without diminishing irreplaceable environmental and recreational assets.

Actions pertaining to the location of newly built schools should be made in accordance with the "Arlington Way" tradition of genuine, broad-based consultation with affected parents, neighbors, community and civic associations before decisions are made. First priority should be attached to utilizing existing and re-purposed public schools to create necessary seats for students in lieu of building upon and paving over open space.

The Arlington School Board's decision to build a new elementary school at Williamsburg Middle School prior to completion of traffic / infrastructure analyses and to co-locate an elementary with the middle school on the WMS campus without adequate consultation with affected citizens represents a serious breach of the "Arlington Way".

Such a departure from an inclusive, prudent and cost-effective decision process sets a precedent that jeopardizes the rights and best interests of citizens in all parts of Arlington County now and in the future. Consequently, the decision to build a new elementary school at Williamsburg Middle School should be re-considered by the Arlington School Board as soon as possible, in the best interests of the kindergarten and elementary school students of North Arlington, Williamsburg Middle School students, and the Rock Spring and surrounding communities.

Now therefore be it resolved that the Rock Spring Civic Association shall communicate these views to the Arlington Public School Board, the Arlington County Board, other local civic associations and affected environmental, recreational and public interest groups.