

# Douglas MacArthur Rebuild Remarks

## February 6, 2020

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Dear School Board Members,

Thank you for continuing to support our school system and the rigorous design and construction schedule for Douglas MacArthur. I am the Advisory Group representative for the Seminary Hill Association (SHA) community, last year's MacArthur PTA President, the PTAC President Elect, and a parent of three children at MacArthur. The remarks below are on behalf of the various groups I represent, as indicated with each of these four issues:

### **1. Co-located services (SHA & PTA)**

Thank you for removing co-located housing for consideration with the MacArthur project, due to the tight construction schedule and lack of existing guidance regarding how co-located services should be assessed and implemented by the City and ACPS. Although we all need to do our part and we thoroughly support collaborative efforts, we also must undertake a deliberative, stakeholder-engaged process. To this end, I ask that ACPS and the City continue and increase efforts to work together because, as we have witnessed with considerable finger-pointing and lack of ownership in the past month, there is still significant room for improved relationships and coordination.

### **2. MacArthur PTA Co-Location Survey (PTA)**

The most recent results are attached and reflect the same trends seen earlier although now with over 500 responses. Most respondents do not want co-located housing although nearly half are open to considering other co-located services, such as a recreational center and a daycare facility. Given that MacArthur is on a tight timeline, if co-location is to be considered on the site, it must be discussed and decided very soon. Please let me or Kristina Seppala, current PTA President, know if you would like more information regarding the survey.

### **3. Rebuild Design Concepts (SHA & PTA)**

From the Seminary Hill Association (SHA) and MacArthur PTA Communities, the feedback has been roughly balanced between the Forest and "Y" concepts, with a slight preference for the Forest concept. The Forest concept reduces the visual impact of the facility by placing the taller areas of the structure toward the back of the property, so it is not as imposing toward Janneys Lane. The Forest concept also makes the green space / play areas more visible to the community, although the counter consideration is that it provides less of a barrier between students at play and the broader community. On the topic of play areas, the "Y" concept has a

more contiguous play area, which is attractive to many families, especially those with children with differing ages.

If possible, we would like the Project Team to consider having classrooms on both sides of the second and third floor hallways, not just on the one side to the north as currently conceptualized. Having classrooms on both sides is a more efficient use of space and materials and can likely reduce the footprint of the overall structure. There is benefit having open, flexible community spaces for each grade level (e.g., "pods"), so it could be beneficial to consider some non-traditional spaces on the south side of the upper two hallways.

**4. Include ALL Paraprofessionals in the Proposed Salary Increase (PTAC & PTA)**

The paraprofessionals I have known are some of the hardest working individuals, often doing the same work as their colleagues on the Licensed Teacher Pay Scale, while working with some of our youngest and most sensitive students.

Thank you again for your support of and dedication to our community.

Sincerely,  
Bill Pfister