

April 25, 2018

Ginger Brown, Chair; Greg Greeley, Vice Chair, and Commissioners  
Joint Facilities Advisory Commission (JFAC)  
c/o Department of Planning, Housing, and Community Development  
2100 Clarendon Boulevard  
Arlington, VA 22201



Re: Proposed APS license agreement to park white fleet vehicles at the Buck Property

Dear Ginger, Greg and JFAC Commissioners:

The Ballston-Virginia Square Civic Association (BVSCA) met on Monday, April 23 and heard from John Chadwick, APS, re: a proposed license agreement with the County to park white fleet vehicles at the Buck property. Mr. Chadwick had sent a request to BVSCA on April 17 asking to be included in our next membership meeting and indicating County staff had asked him/his group to explain to our members what they were proposing: *"Would it be possible to get on the agenda for your next meeting, so we can get to the County and School Boards in order to have the license agreement effective on time for July 1?"*

While our members appreciated the opportunity to learn more about the proposal and to ask questions, many in attendance (including some who live in Ballston...not next door to the site) felt this proposal was very rushed and appeared to be an already 'done deal'.

The following are comments from our members who attended our 4/23 meeting which we felt JFAC commissioners should have as they are informed about this proposal at tonight's (April 25) meeting.

As always, we appreciate your consideration of our concerns.

Sincerely,

Nia R. Bagley, President  
Ballston-Virginia Square Civic Association

cc: Bob Duffy, Planning Director

Issue	Background	Concerns/Unanswered Questions
Types of Vehicles	<p>Many types of vehicles fall under the "white fleet" category, as described on the JFAC website: <i>"The APS white fleet comprises: SUVs such as Ford Escapes or Ford Explorers; Vans in various sizes and configurations; Minivans; Pick-up trucks; Dump trucks; Various other miscellaneous vehicles."</i></p> <p>Some of these - dump trucks, various other miscellaneous vehicles, diesel or "noisy" vehicles - could be problematic and inconsistent with the earlier guidance from JFAC.</p>	<p>APS should provide a list and number of each of the types of vehicles proposed. Specifics are needed and pictures would be helpful.</p> <p>Those vehicles most inconsistent with JFAC's earlier guidance should <u>not</u> be kept at the Buck site.</p>

<p><b>Perceptions and Norms</b></p>	<p>Consistent with JFAC's earlier guidance, bus type vehicles are not a good or appropriate use of the space. BVSCA has been told that buses are not part of the white fleet.</p> <p>Nevertheless, even though the so-called "white fleet" is being proposed, the area could still look like a facilities vehicle storage yard. It will change perceptions of the space and potentially have a long term effect.</p>	<p>APS and the County should minimize the number of vehicles proposed for storage at the site so as to discourage the perception that non-car vehicles at the site are the norm (i.g., SUVs are preferred over dump trucks.)</p> <p>JFAC should provide clarity that this type of <u>temporary</u> storage use would not imply that it would become the norm for anything beyond the temporary period (i.e., 2 years).</p>
<p><b>Temporary Becoming Permanent</b></p>	<p>There is a risk that a 2-year temporary situation could turn permanent.</p>	<p>APS and the County should provide clarity to JFAC and the neighborhood on how they are working on a solution to not store vehicles at this site beyond the 2-year request.</p>
<p><b>Noise - Volume, Type, Time of Day</b></p>	<p>Noise is among the biggest concerns among neighbors. The area is extremely quiet and has been for the last 20+ years, with only rare exceptions for certain limited events or activities.</p> <p><b>Time of Day.</b> Shifts could start as early as 4:00 am, with APS staff arriving as early as 3:30 am to transfer to the vehicles. Another shift could start at 6:00 am. Most shifts would end by 6:00 pm, but some could go to 10:30 pm.</p> <p><b>Volume and Type.</b> With up to 40 vehicles, many potentially arriving between 3:30 am to 6:00 am. the noise in the neighborhood (noisy vehicles coming/going, car doors shutting, car radio music, back-up beeping, chit chatting) could be disturbing to the residential community.</p>	<p>JFAC should recommend a <u>baseline noise study</u> before any major changes to the site begin.</p> <p>Any shift starting before 7:00 am should be done in a different or existing site.</p> <p>Shifts ending at 10:30 pm should be limited.</p> <p>All vehicles should be backed-in at the end of the day to eliminate back-up beeping at shift starts.</p> <p>APS staff should have norms in place to require quiet behaviors from staff starting/ending shifts.</p>
<p><b>Environmental Considerations</b></p>	<p>Diesel vehicles.</p> <p>See the 2000 Arlington County report, "Industrial Land Use and Zoning Study," which concludes with the environmental consequences of auto storage (and towing). It also states, in part, that auto storage should be located in a district for similar type of land intensive uses.</p>	<p>JFAC should recommend a <u>baseline environmental study</u> before any major changes to the site begin.</p> <p>Diesel vehicles should be discouraged at the Buck space.</p>
<p><b>Traffic and Neighborhood Streets</b></p>	<p>All vehicles entering and leaving the Buck site would enter a 2-lane road (Quincy). All other neighboring streets are also 2-lane and residential (14<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, etc.). There is no stop light at the Buck entrance.</p>	<p>All vehicles should avoid traveling on residential streets and commit to staying on Quincy to Washington Blvd, etc.</p>
<p><b>Education Center</b></p>	<p>BVSCA was informed that APS is looking at potentially using the Ed Center for some bus parking.</p>	<p>The community still has many unanswered questions about this proposal on which they have had little time to comment. If the Ed Center is available for more intensive white fleet use (early/late shift changes, bigger vehicles), APS should explore moving some white fleet vehicles to the Ed Center.</p>
<p><b>Fox Habitat</b></p>	<p>There is a fox habitat in the general area, especially close to the old bowling alley.</p>	<p>APS and the County should have County wildlife staff assess the situation to determine how the habitat can be maintained.</p>