

Community Facilities Study - Comments on 2nd Draft Report

Page numbers refer to the formatted version of the 2nd Draft, dated 10/28/2015

Source	Page # (Draft 2)	Comment	Outcome (with page references to Final Report when applicable)
Executive Summary			
10/28 Meeting		Make recommendations 17 and 18 more prominent as the primary recommendations of the Committee	New language has been added to first pages of Executive Summary (pp. 11-12).
10/28 Meeting		Too much focus on outward push of information rather than meaningful opportunities for participation. Revise section to be consistent with proposed changes to the "community dialogue" section.	Recommendations #19-21 have been revised to differentiate between 1-way communication and public participation; language revised in Ch. 3 (pp. 99-100).
Chapter 1			
Resident Forum Member	21	Since the report compares 2015 with 2040, a 25-year span in the future, it is more appropriate to compare with 1990, a 25-year span in the past. The estimated 2015 population of 216,700 is a 27% increase since 1990's 171,174 population.	Historic population data is included in the Companion Document to the Final Report. No change made to the Final Report.
Study Committee Member	24	I would add something about the in-person modality of sharing the work of the CFS. (Open house, and the County fair.) Not all communication was or can be electronic.	This information is discussed on pp. 29-30 ("Community Facilities Study Process").
Chapter 2 - Demographic Forecasts and Projections			
Resident Forum Member	33	This sort of two-point present-to-past comparison gives the false impression that the past was static. It would be more useful to present a bar-chart showing the changing racial/ethnic composition over several decades, say in 1960/1970/1980/1990/2000/2010.	This information was not readily available in the limited time allotted for revising Draft 2. No change made to the Final Report.
Study Committee Member	33	Add the current percentage distribution, not only the changes. Focusing on the rate of change leaves the reader with a different impression. Despite the 22% increase of Asians, they represent less than 9% of the population while despite the 11% decrease in Latino population, such population represents 15%.	This text has been revised (p. 40).
Resident Forum Member	34	Since the portion of households with children has remained stable at roughly 1-in-5, but most net new housing is multi-family, it appears that about 1-in-5 households in new multi-family units have children under 18. This is a significant change from past housing patterns and should be explicitly noted.	The data provided to the Study Committee does not support this assertion. The second phase of the consultant study (described on pp. 48-49) will include an analysis of student generation from different housing types and characteristics, including new construction, for the years 2010 and 2015. An example of the type of data that can be provided in this analysis is the percentage of households with student in APS for different housing types and the average number of students generated by those households. No change made to the Final Report.
Study Committee Member	34-35	What is meant by 'multi-family' ? Would a one bedroom apartment unit count as one of such units though a 'family of more than 2' might not be allowed to occupy such unit?	A footnote has been added to p. 42 to clarify the definition of multi-family housing.

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Resident Forum Member	35	The statistics APS provided show that 45% of school enrollment growth in the 5-year period 2008/09 to 2013/14 come from single-family homes. 55% of enrollment growth in that period came from households in multi-family buildings.	
Resident Forum Member	38	The statistics APS provided show that 55% of enrollment growth in the period 2008/09 to 2013/14 came from households living in multi-family units. This is a change from prior years when single-family homes generated more than half of enrollment growth. What is not known is how much of this multi-family building enrollment growth is from changing living patterns (families staying in multi-family units as children grow) vs. families with school-age children moving into newly built multi-family buildings.	The statistics cited in the report cover a longer time period (2005 to 2013). The second phase of the consultant study will look at student generation from different housing types and characteristics, including multi-family and single family housing for the years 2010 and 2015. No change made to the Final Report.
Study Committee Member	38	Define multi-family units. Need to include the # of bedrooms indicator.	A footnote has been added to p. 42 to clarify the definition of multi-family housing.
Chapter 2 - Facility Inventory and Projected Needs			
Resident Forum Member	43	Further to my earlier comments on the definition, I would propose the following simpler replacement for the relevant sentence: "For the purposes of this report, a "community facility" is defined as land, buildings or infrastructure that is or will be owned, operated or leased by Arlington County or Arlington Public Schools, to provide governmental services and/or to support a specific County or School function, including without limitation administration; human services; libraries operations and storage; parking; parks, recreation and cultural; public safety; schools and education; transportation; and utilities and storm water management." The punctuation needs to be adjusted clearly. A way to test this simpler definition is to answer the question of what "community facility" is not covered by it. Put differently, what is not covered by this definition that was presumably being covered by the second clause that I have now deleted?	A number of comments were provided on the Study Committee's definition of "community facility." The definition has not been changed from Draft 2, but the paragraphs following the definition have been revised to include the Kettler Iceplex as an example of a public-private partnership, rather than Arlington Mill Community Center/Residences (p. 51).
Resident Forum Member	43	In my comments to the first draft, I highlighted the need for a definition of "community facility" given that the term by itself would probably be assumed to refer to "buildings" and not land, such as a park. The first clause of this new definition, through the words "...or Arlington Public Schools" addresses that request in a clear and concrete fashion, is self explanatory, and will address the ambiguity in the use of the term that I previously identified. However, the remainder of the definition does not meet the requirements of a clear and concrete definition and in fact introduces even more uncertainty; it should be deleted. If a definition on its face is not clear in intent, it fails a basic requirements of a definition which is the case with this latter clause.	

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Resident Forum Member (continued from above)	43	<p>The new language goes on to attempt to address a concern I raised at the Study meeting where this definition was first introduced, namely that it would arguably bring within its ambit affordable housing activities receiving assistance by the County. The example of Arlington Mill, utilized to clarify this clause in the third paragraph of this section as an example of such an affordable housing activity that falls within its ambit, actually exemplifies why this part of the problem is extremely problematic and should be deleted. If I understand correctly, the Arlington Mill Residences was neither developed nor is it currently managed in "partnership" by the County and a nonprofit. Although the non profit housing and County facility may be adjacent, the housing was separately built, and is currently separately managed, by the nonprofit. Similarly, to my knowledge the nonprofit played no role in the development of the County's Arlington Mill Community Center nor in its current management.</p>	
Resident Forum Member (continued from above)	43	<p>In other words, there is no material distinction between the way in which the Arlington Mill Residences was financed by the County and the way in which the County helps finance other affordable housing in the County through nonprofits nor does the leasing of public land by the County to the nonprofit for the affordable housing at Arlington Mill constitute a "partnership" nor warrant being considered a "public facility". Without any meaningful distinction, this example and the very unclear clause in the definition could bring all affordable housing within the definition of "community facility" which the definition indicates is not the intent and would clearly be inappropriate.</p>	See above.
Resident Forum Member (continued from above)	43	<p>Although presumably not intended, application of this ambiguous clause, along with Section 3.5.2 of the recently adopted Master Affordable Housing Plan, could be read as an attempt to utilize the proposed siting process as well as the proposed facilities prioritization structure (e.g. the new citizens' committee and joint 4 member County and APS Boards committee) as a vehicle for allocating more public land for affordable housing along the model of Arlington Mill. And if this is indeed the intent, that needs to be clearly stated in the body of this document to ensure a clear public understanding and opportunity to comment, and not pursued through an ambiguous definition. Again, hopefully that is not the intent.</p>	
Study Committee Member	43	<p>Might suggest that an example of where such a partnership has facilitated the development of a community facility in the past, e.g. the Kettler Capitals Iceplex on the Ballston Parking Structure.</p>	

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Study Committee Member	43	Would suggest that Affordable Housing should never be considered to be a community facility, but could be considered as an acceptable joint use with a community facility. I therefore would suggest that following alternative language: "As defined for this study, affordable housing is not considered to be a community facility. However, it might be considered as an acceptable joint use that could be considered with a community facility when an additional public benefit can be clearly demonstrated from combining affordable housing with a planned community facility on publically-owned land such as Arlington Mill Residences and Arlington Mill Community Center."	The following sentences have been revised/added to Chapter 3 under <i>Strategic Facility Planning and Priority Setting</i> (p. 96): "The analysis would also incorporate policy guidance from the Facility Strategic Planning Committee, such as opportunities for co-location, which could include preliminary recommendations for complementary uses. Complementary uses could be additional community facilities identified through the needs assessment process or could be non-facility uses that provide public benefits or meet public goals."
Study Committee Member	43	Would suggest that additional language be added here clarifying that their may be additional joint uses which while not community facilities themselves, might be acceptable to pair with a community facility.	
Study Committee Member	45	This statement ("Facilities serving the public are generally evenly distributed around the County...") is aspirational unless we have the data that supports that the facilities are indeed evenly distributed around the County. Suggested revision: "Facilities serving the public are distributed around the County, making them mostly convenient destinations within neighborhoods."	Suggested change has been made (p. 53).
Resident Forum Member	45	Actually, most school facilities are fully used by the schools during extended hours before and after school and are not available to the public during these times. For example, elementary school Extended Day programs run from 7:00 am to 6:00 pm, using the cafeteria, multi-purpose rooms, libraries, and outdoor recreational areas, which are NOT available for community use at those times. Similarly, most middle and high school athletic facilities are fully used for school team practices/games in the afternoons and often in the evenings and are not available for community use.	Text has been revised to say that schools are available for community use "in the evenings and on weekends" (p. 53).
Resident Forum Member	46	A substantial portion of county parks is land within flood plains that cannot be developed for other purposes.	The report acknowledges that 245 acres of County parkland is in Resource Protection Areas (p. 55).
Resident Forum Member	48	Additionally, a significant number of school playing fields have been lost to school, and potential community, use when they have been covered by relocatable classrooms.	The report acknowledges this point in Chapter 3 (p. 80).
Chapter 2 - Revenues and Capital Funding			
Study Committee Member	53	Suggest revision: 'lower class sizes' but there is a need to provide a frame of reference: compared to average class size in the DMV, in VA, nation? APS should have this.	This bullet has been clarified (p. 61). The text originally published in the Final Report has also been corrected to note that the statistics cited are for the 2015-16 school year (Errata Sheet, p. 2).

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Resident Forum Member	54	The 50/50 residential/commercial split is not compelling or unique. It is simply due to the fact that a significant portion of Arlington's housing consists of apartment buildings which are categorized as commercial rather than residential. If apartments were categorized as residential, the residential/commercial split would be 71/29.	The report acknowledges that rental apartments are categorized as part of the commercial tax base and provides a detailed breakdown of the different commercial components (pp. 63-64). The comparison of Arlington's commercial tax base to that of other jurisdictions in Northern Virginia is appropriate as those jurisdictions also have rental housing stock that is categorized as commercial. No change made to the Final Report.
Resident Forum Member	56	Although the office vacancy rate has been increasing, the rapid rate of new construction has also been increasing the total amount of office space. It would be more informational to add a bar to each quarter showing total office space.	New office construction has slowed significantly as the vacancy rate has increased. Between 2010 and the end of 2014, new office construction averaged 241,000 square feet per year. As a comparison, for the 10 year period 2002-2011, office construction averaged 636,000 square feet per year. (Source: <i>Annual Development Highlights</i> , http://projects.arlingtonva.us/data-research/development/annual-development-highlights/). No change made to the Final Report.
Chapter 3			
Resident Forum Member	72	How can the recommendations not include a requirement for a cost-benefit analysis? This should be a requirement for any community facility, particularly facilities that replace existing facilities. The community must know the cost compared to alternatives before any informed decision can be made. Too often (e.g. Year Round Homeless Center, Fire Station #8 replacement, etc.) the County presents their preferred new facility but does not provide any alternatives, justifications, or estimates of replacing/improving the existing facility.	New language has been added on cost-benefit analysis to assess alternatives (p. 95)
Resident Forum Member	73	"Most" is not true. The data provided by APS shows that multi-family buildings contributed 55% of enrollment growth between 2008/09 and 2013/14. In that period, single-family homes generated almost half (45%) of enrollment growth.	Text has been revised to clarify that this is for the time period of 2005 to 2013 (p. 82).
Resident Forum Member	73	Most of Arlington County is "the suburbs."	Text has been revised to "outer suburbs" (p. 83).
Resident Forum Member	73	Why is keeping millennials critical for Arlington's labor force? A majority of working Arlingtonians commute to jobs in DC and will likely continue to do so for the foreseeable future. Similarly, there is no reason to believe that in future years people will no longer be able to commute to jobs in Arlington.	The Study Committee believes that having a significant portion of millennials in its labor force will be attractive to employers. If the millennials move to the outer suburbs as they become a larger part of the region's workforce, employers may follow them. No change made to the Final Report.

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Study Committee Member	74	Why mention students from low-income households here? The percentage of Arlington County residents who live in poverty has not been raised earlier or the percentage of APS students who are from low-income households. Suggest: DELETE 'including students from low-income households' and ADD 'from all income levels.' The need for after school programs applies to a larger range of incomes since many families have two-working parents.	The reference to students from low-income households has been deleted (p. 82).
Resident Forum Member	74	Agree (with above comment). For example, APS' Extended Day programs are available to households in which BOTH parents work. After-school enrichment programs are available to families who can afford to pay for them.	
10/28 Meeting	75	Add a recommendation about millennials to parallel recommendation on the over 65 population	Recommendation #8 has been revised to include millennials in addition to the over 65 population (p. 84).
Resident Forum Member	78	Note how much of the \$55 million in housing funds is a Federal pass-thru	This information was not readily available in the limited time allotted for revising Draft 2. Further research indicates that, in FY 2014, 35% of funding for housing programs (\$19.4 million out of \$55.1 million) came from federal and state sources. No change made to the Final Report.
Study Committee Member	79	This page ("New multi-family units are largely one-bedroom rental units...") should be referenced in the earlier part of the report that mentions multi-family units.	A footnote has been added to p. 42 to clarify the definition of multi-family housing.
10/28 Meeting	81	Bottom graphic – remove “timeline” from title	This has been corrected (p. 91).
Study Committee Member	82	Since this is the same language as is already outlined in Chapter 2, would it be possible just to refer back to it as opposed to repeat it again.	The definition of a "community facility" and supporting text has been removed from Chapter 3, as it repeats information from Chapter 2 (p. 51).
Study Committee Member	89	Immigrant and non-English speaking community remains on the sidelines of most community processes.	The first paragraph on p. 99 has been revised to mention these communities and the challenge of reaching them in community processes.
10/28 Meeting	90	Rec #19 - doesn't read right; needs editing	The two recommendations (#19 and #20) from Draft 2 have been revised to become three recommendations (#19, #20 and #21) and have been edited to reflect the Study Committee's comments.
10/28 Meeting	90	Rec #19 should be split into two recommendations – second is improve opportunities for meaningful public participation and make better use of skills in the community	
Study Committee Member	90	While I agree with recommendations 19 and 20, it's not just about the media/communications channels, it's also about message content and timeliness, including a much better use of The Citizen	
10/28 Meeting	90	Rec #20 should be about using technologies to push out and pull in	
10/28 Meeting	90	What is most helpful is when people see what happens to their comments. we need a real commitment to listening to what people have to say. Federal government processes have a a "response to comments" that indicates what was adopted, what was not, and why.	A new sentence has been added to the third paragraph on p. 99 to address this comment.

Source	Page # (Draft 2)	Comment	Outcome (with page references to Final Report when applicable)
Chapter 4			
10/28 Meeting		Re-organize this section around the different categories (short term, mid term, etc.) and put recommendations #17 and #18 first.	The Implementation section of Chapter 4 has been reorganized as recommended by the Study Committee (pp. 103 - 109).
10/28 Meeting	92	Recs. #1-4 are not actionable. Suggest calling these our for continued or renewed emphasis.	Chapter 4 groups Recommendations #1-4 together under an implementation recommendation to "Adopt the following policies..." (p. 106).
10/28 Meeting	96	Use lowercase "vision" for Recommendation #1 under Additional Studies. Explain more what the components of the vision are - primarily the land use plan. GLUP determines future population and where it will go. The size and scope of the community we will become. Need to step back and ask if that is that what we want to become? If not, what are the implications? Clarify that this would be a re-examination of the vision for the whole County, not just pieces.	This recommendation has been revised (p. 110).
10/28 Meeting	96	Refine language on BLPC/PFRC recommendation	This recommendation has been revised (pp. 110-111).