

# City of Takoma Park, Maryland

**Office of the City Manager**

Tel: (301) 891-7230

Fax: (301) 270-8794

email: [SuzanneL@takomaparkmd.gov](mailto:SuzanneL@takomaparkmd.gov)



7500 Maple Avenue  
Takoma Park, MD 20912  
[www.takomaparkmd.gov](http://www.takomaparkmd.gov)

*Suzanne R. Ludlow, City Manager*

March 9, 2018

Dr. Jack R. Smith  
Superintendent, Montgomery County Public Schools  
850 Hungerford Drive  
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Dear Dr. Smith,

Enclosed please find Resolution 2018-15 from the Takoma Park City Council regarding the need for additional elementary school facilities in the Takoma Park area. Mayor Kate Stewart and I would like to meet with you to discuss these matters and ways for us to work together.

The demographic patterns in the area have been changing. While we support the expansion of Piney Branch Elementary School, that expansion alone will not be sufficient to address the increase in the number of children in our community. According to the American Community Survey of the U.S. Census, the number of children who live in Takoma Park between the ages of 5 and 14 increased by 330 from the survey covering 2006-2010 to that covering 2012-2016. The population under the age of 5 also increased by over 100 in the same time frame. This increase is without any new housing development in our community during that period. Given demographic trends and our plans for redevelopment along the east side of our city, the growth is likely to continue.

As mentioned in the Council Resolution, the City has new information regarding the availability of the Washington Adventist Hospital campus, which will be vacated by the Hospital in 2019. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss this opportunity with you. My Executive Assistant Peggye Washington can work with your office to identify a good date and time to meet. Peggye can be reached at 301-891-7320 or [peggyew@takomaparkmd.gov](mailto:peggyew@takomaparkmd.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Suzanne R. Ludlow".

Suzanne R. Ludlow  
City Manager

Introduced by: Councilmember Smith

**CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND**

**Resolution 2018-15**

**Resolution Requesting that the Montgomery County Public Schools  
Consider a New School Site in the Takoma Park Area**

- WHEREAS,** Montgomery County Public Schools convened a committee to review and recommend sites for a new elementary school in the Downcounty Consortium area to alleviate overcrowding in the schools; and
- WHEREAS,** the Committee recommended Forest Grove Elementary School, 9805 Dameron Drive, Silver Spring, as the first choice for a new elementary school, and MacDonald Knolls Elementary School, 10611 Tenbrook Drive, Silver Spring, as the second choice, both locations outside the Beltway; and
- WHEREAS,** no sites within the City of Takoma Park were included as finalists for a new school, despite the growth in the City's school age population; and
- WHEREAS,** MCPS's past school enrollment projections have significantly under-estimated student population growth in this area and, with the coming of the Purple Line and the zoning changes in the Takoma Langley Crossroads and New Hampshire Avenue Corridor, an increased demand for housing for families is expected; and
- WHEREAS,** public elementary school students from Takoma Park primarily attend Takoma Park Elementary School, Piney Branch Elementary School or Rolling Terrace Elementary School; and
- WHEREAS,** the proposed expansions of Piney Branch Elementary School (on the smallest MCPS school parcel) and East Silver Spring Elementary School will not be sufficient to fully address the need for elementary school space in the Takoma Park area; and
- WHEREAS,** MCPS's criteria for site selection undervalued important factors such as walkability; operational costs of busing; and impact on sustainability efforts, as well as the impact on a large number of non-white students, with 73 percent of the students at Takoma Park Elementary, Piney Branch Elementary, and Rolling Terrace Elementary being students of color; and
- WHEREAS,** MCPS and Montgomery County do not have a process in place for siting new schools when no available site is identified in a Master Plan, nor does MCPS have criteria established to address the use of park land and open spaces for school sites and requirements for replacement of those lands; and
- WHEREAS,** Montgomery County could deny approval of proposed developments if a location does not have Adequate Public Facilities, including school capacity, thereby limiting the redevelopment of the New Hampshire Avenue corridor, which is a

transit-oriented area and the redevelopment of which is a long-standing goal of the City and County established with the Council adoption of the New Hampshire Avenue Corridor Concept Plan in 2008 and the Montgomery County Takoma/Langley Crossroads Sector Plan.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND THAT** the City of Takoma Park requests that Montgomery County Public Schools locate a new school in or near Takoma Park to accommodate the growing population of school age children.


**AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** MCPS and Montgomery County should continue to allocate the funds required for the expansion of Piney Branch Elementary School which is necessary to partially accommodate the growing population of school age children.

**AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT,** in addition to other nearby sites, MCPS study the feasibility of using the Washington Adventist Hospital campus, which meets the criteria for school site selection, for the location of a new school. The City has recently learned new information regarding the timing and availability of the Hospital campus, which will be vacated in 2019.

**AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** the City of Takoma Park [or City Council] requests that MCPS and Montgomery County develop a process for siting new schools when no available site is identified in a Master Plan, as well as develop criteria to guide the use of parkland and open space for schools, determining when and under what considerations the use of parkland is acceptable for a school site and specifying the replacement requirements. Privately owned land should be given serious consideration, especially in dense Downcounty locations, with both the short-term costs of land purchase and the long-term costs of busing students weighed into decisions. Walkability, sustainability, racial equity, and the development of strong community schools should be important factors in decision-making about school sites.

**Adopted this 7<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2018.**

Attest:

  
Jessie Carpenter, CMC  
City Clerk