

Subject: Silver Lake Corrections

From: Prince William Conservation Alliance <alliance@pwconserve.org>

Date: Mon, 24 Sep 2007 13:54:29 -0400

To: "Stewart, Corey A." <cstewart@pwcgov.org>

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BCC: Martin Jeter <sanmar02@aol.com>, Charlie Grymes <cgrymes@gmail.com>

Dear Chairman Stewart:

In your September 18 deliberation regarding Silver Lake, you were provided incorrect information regarding the content of the citizens drafts of Comprehensive Plan chapters on Parks, Open Space, and Trails. Everyone is entitled to their own opinions regarding the Silver Lake issue, but you should be working from accurate information before making your final decision.

You may have received the impression that the Silver Lake property, if transferred to the Bull Run Mountain Conservancy, would not be considered as county parkland in the citizen drafts.

If fact, such acreage would be treated as county parkland using the definition we proposed ("Public parks are those lands owned, leased or secured under easement or use agreement by a political body for the benefit of the citizens and managed for recreation and resource protection purposes.")

We support public-private partnerships and included the following statements in the draft Parks Chapter that the Community Coalition of Citizen Groups presented to the Planning Commission on August 1 (see http://www.pwconserve.org/issues/openspace/final_parks_july2007.pdf).

Unfortunately these statements have been deleted in the version now being proposed by Planning Department staff:

- PK POLICY 1, Action Strategy 1:
In order to be included in the inventory of public park land and facilities, private parks must be accessible to all members of the public under permanent easement and/or irrevocable agreement.

- PK POLICY 1, Action Strategy 5:

Parkland statistics developed for the purpose of assessing the adequacy of service levels shall include only parks and facilities owned by the county or privately owned properties that are permanently protected and accessible to the public.

Please note that in all our efforts to provide a definition of protected open space that would be recommended by the Planning Commission, we have consistently stated that protected open space includes private land that is not open to the public, so long as that land is protected from development by an enforceable easement.

The Planning Commission is clearly having difficulty with the definition of "protected open space" in our Open Space chapter. Perhaps the following definition, developed by the Chesapeake Bay Program, might be easier for you to use:

Protected Open Space - "Land that is permanently protected from development with a perpetual conservation or open space easement or fee ownership, held by a federal, state or local government or nonprofit organization for natural resource, forestry, agriculture, wildlife, recreation, historic, cultural or open space use, or to sustain water quality and living resource values."

We appreciate your continued interest in the County's extended discussions about parks, trails and open space.

Sincerely,

Martin Jeter
Charlie Grymes

cc: members of the Board of County Supervisors

cc: members of the Planning Commission

cc: members of the Park Authority