

Valley View Public School
OFFICE OF SUPERINTENDENT
2131 VALLEY VIEW DRIVE
JONESBORO, ARKANSAS 72404

October 5, 2022

To City Council Members and Other Officials:

The Valley View School District opposes the rezoning request for the additional 4.41 acres at Thompson Drive and Southwest Drive. The district appreciates the zoning density change from RM-16 to RM-12 for this parcel by Mr. Moore and Mr. Best at the MAPC meeting on September 27, but the concerns the district shared at the MAPC continue to be held if the additional parcel is rezoned to RM-12.

Primary District Concerns with the Rezoning Request:

- **Growing Scale of Development –**

While the initial rezoning request for the 2.45-acre parcel was not one that our district would have preferred for neighboring property, the development was buffered by additional land that now is included in the additional 4.41-acre parcel that is currently in the request for rezoning. If approved, this request would more than double the number of potential units in the development from 39 units with the initial request to 92 for the entire 6.86-acre combined property.

The owners have also indicated that they would like to purchase additional adjoining land. This future expansion is supported by the additional road that dead ends in the proposed site plan but leads to an additional 15.59-acre parcel that Mr. Moore has expressed interest in purchasing for development. If this expansion became reality, the additional concerns listed below would be compounded with potential needs for road widening on other access roads to the school to provide alternate traffic flow options for parents and students, a potential need for an additional traffic light at Christian Valley Drive and Southwest Drive, even greater safety concerns for our Junior High School that sits directly to the east of the property, and additional drainage concerns.

- **Traffic Impacts –**

Traffic in and around the Valley View campus is a challenge each of the 178 school days during pick-up and drop-off times due to the percentage of our 2,900 students that are transported by personal vehicle.

Thompson Drive, which is one of the roads that has a planned entrance and exit noted in the development plan, is congested each school day from 7:05am to 7:55am as parents wait to drop off their children for school and from 2:45pm to 3:10pm as parents wait to pick up their children at the end of the day. The congestion affects both lanes with the south/southeastern lane often backed up the full length of the road with vehicles in the turning lane on Southwest Drive waiting to turn onto Thompson Drive as vehicles move on campus. The north/northwestern lane oftentimes is backed up as well as vehicles stack up at the stop sign waiting to turn onto the busy Southwest Drive. Due to the aforementioned traffic conditions, the ingress/egress planned for Thompson Drive will be mostly unusable during drop-off and pick-up times especially with the gated access planned for the development. Therefore, during these busy commute timeframes, the congestion will effectively leave the planned development with only one usable ingress/egress onto the busy Southwest Drive.

- **Safety –**

Introducing multi-family developments to parcels of land adjoining a school district is always concerning. The current plan for this to be a senior (55+) living development does somewhat decrease the level of concern when it comes to safety. However, the possibility for this development vision to be modified by the current or future owners of this parcel after it has been rezoned is something that must be considered. With Valley View Junior High School to the east of the development, if changes are made to the current development plans in terms of target residents, unit density, or gated access, this would greatly increase our safety concerns with the proximity to the school and entire district campus.

- **Drainage –**

The drainage of water coming from developments to the north and west of this parcel of land and flowing to the ditches behind the planned development and on land owned by the district is a concern as this development is introduced to the heavy drainage demand that already exists in this area. After speaking with Mr. Moore, I feel that this concern is being accounted for in the current plans with the combination retention pond and community pond, but again our concern is if changes are made to these plans and negative impacts result on land owned by the district.

If you require additional information, please feel free to contact me at 870-935-6200.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Roland Popejoy', with a large, stylized flourish extending from the end of the signature.

Roland Popejoy, Superintendent
Valley View School District