

NE Elementary Community Boundary Study Public Email Log: 11/17/17 to 11/27/17

Date: 11/17/2017, 1034 hrs

Name: Craig Blinke

Dear BCPS Board and other local leaders,

Planning block 30 needs your help. My name is Craig Blinke. I am resident of the Parkside Community off of Honeygo Blvd. Recently our community found out that there is a plan in place to send our children across Honeygo to a new school. Our community is completely united on our desire to remain the Chapel Hill School Zone. We have dug very deep into the current zoning process, from attending all meetings (65 in attendance for the public meeting), engaging professions for research, responding to emails/surveys and reaching out to our committee members. Throughout this process we have found it difficult at time to get traction with the committee. We were added to the most recent maps, but bulldozed by the committee members from Vincent Farm in the recent meeting. (this can be viewed on the new school construction website) We have studied in great detail Rule 1280 and are very aware of the requirements for establishing new boundaries. Below I am going to spell out each part of rule 1280 and how it relates to our neighborhood, followed by a few issues I see with the current process as well. Rule 1280

- 1)Maintaining the continuity of neighborhoods – our neighborhood currently walks to many family events at Chapel Hill. The School is .3 miles from our home with no major roadways in between. We use Rexis Ave to make this walk. It is my understanding that Rexis will be closed when the Strawberry fields development is done. However, we have drawings of the new community and there will be a sidewalk that connects our community to Chapel Hill, making the walk only .3 miles on a safe pattern. we can provide these drawings if desired.
- 2)Maintaining or increasing the diversity among schools to reflect the diversity of the region and the school system - We have asked the firm doing the study for planning block by planning block diversity info and have not received. We believe based on our HOA, that we have 60% diversity in our neighborhood. (you will see this in person at any public zoning meeting) Chapel Hill is currently around 35%. Therefore removing us from the school in anyway would make the argument that this would not maintain the diversity levels. Given the fact that Chapel Hill is already well below the region average for diversity.
- 3)The impact of transportation and pedestrian patterns on students – We feel that turning onto Honeygo and crossing lanes to make a left onto Joppa is more dangerous than making the current right turn onto Honeygo, staying in the slow lane and then making a right on Joppa. BCPS recently did a study to confirm to the committee that this safety concern was debunked because the bus could make a right and then a left. The issue is that the study left out speed of the other drivers and accident reports for that area. I would think these are the two main drivers of a safety study. it also didn't help that the consultant deemed the route as safe for the committee's decision making purposes without having a complete, accurate safety study done. If any of you live in the area, it is easy to see people going 60-80mph on Honeygo because there are no light between Ebenezer and Joppa. It isn't the bus turning that concerned us. It was the outlier driver doing 70mph while texting. We have asked that this be re-evaluated and have not heard back yet. Additionally, there is a real fear that one of our kids get ambitious and attempts to walk home after school event. This would require them to cross Honeygo as an elementary schooler. We can all agree this isn't safe. There aren't sidewalks on Joppa for this voyage either.
- 4)Minimizing the number of times any individual students are reassigned – all the current maps being proposed has the new school close to capacity. I believe we can all agree that the less relief this new school gets at the onset, the sooner we will be over capacity. The regions history would be the easiest example. The reason this is such an important part of this review process in the fact that the new school has documented that they have no room for mobile units. Therefore, if the school is over capacity, this means larger class sizes and not mobiles. Both Chapel Hill and Vincent Farm have excelled given test scores and parent involvement with mobiles on site. Given the land size of these schools, they have a ton of space for mobile units. It wouldn't make common sense to pack the new school and leave other schools that can handle mobile capacity, under capacity. This would set the new school up for failure. Taking all of this into account, our planning block PB30 would be the most logical choice to redistrict back to Chapel Hill to give relief to the new school, hence forcing all of the children in PB30 to transition 2 times in a very short period of time. Leaving them in Chapel Hill could avoid any transition issues entirely.
- 5)Efficient use of capacity in effected schools- Please reiterate the response to #4. If you look at the process, it is almost if it comes down to whether the new school is set of closer to capacity at the onset or Chapel Hill and Vincent Farm get a little less relief at the onset, given their capacity for mobiles. Vincent Farm also has relief coming with the new school in 2020. Through this process every school is represented by 2 parents, the principal and one teacher from each effected school. However the new school has no representation, which is very problematic if and your community is being zoned to the new school. I would love to nominate myself or a few others from the new school communities to represent the new school on the committee if it is not too late.
- 6)Long Term Enrollment and capacity trends and future capital plans –ties back into 4 and 5. Most of the maps give Vincent Farm too much relief given the fact that future capital plans have a new school giving relief in 2020.
- 7)Location of feeder school boundaries and continuity of feeder patterns - most of the maps address this concern. However, there is a new neighborhood this is located over route 7 (FieldCrest). These neighborhood is 2.8 miles from Chapel Hill and has made it public record through email responses on the website that they have been promised by realtors and others that they will be guaranteed Chapel Hill school and Perry Hall High School. As opposed to the future possibility of going to Middle River. They are currently zoned for Vincent Farms. So instead of leaving a neighborhood .3 miles from Chapel Hill in, we are going to pull a new development into the school 2.8 miles away. Many feel that this looks like the map is being drawn for Ryan Homes and realtors. This could pose a problem is folks on the committee had a vested interest in listing homes in this neighborhood. Please read the most recent survey results and emails to confirm these facts.
- 8)Phasing in boundary changes by grade level for high schools- This appears to be ok on all maps. However, the point directly above needs to be addressed. If we have public record that folks are promising school zones that can influence the process, this is a serious issue that needs to be addressed.

Thank you for taking the time to review the above. We are currently trying to figure how to get our voices heard and get buy in from the community. We have tossed around petitions, large signs outside of our neighborhood on Honeygo, media outlets and other. We would love feedback on how to proceed in the most efficient manner. We look forward to seeing all of you at the public hearing on February 21st. You will be able to see our diversity, passion and unity in person before making a decision that could impact so many families in our community. Help us be the voice for the new school that doesn't exist.

I would love to meet with any or all of you to explain the process as we see it and where there appears to be a good amount of special interest in the committee decision making process.

Kind regards, Craig Blinke

NE Elementary Community Boundary Study Public Email Log: 11/17/17 to 11/27/17

Date: 11/20/2017, 1032 hrs

Name: Craig Blinke

Throughout the zoning process thus far I have noticed one theme that is very apparent, the new school has no voice. Every school has a teacher, 2 parents and a principal representing the school. If you are slated for the new school, there is no representation. Therefore if you suggest anything changes, it is very easy to get bulldozed at committee meetings. No matter what the facts are, each perspective school fights for what is best for them (understandably). It might make sense to add 4 people from the slated new school area to be added to the committee. Every meeting I have attended is represented by 4 to 6 committee members who have some connection to Vincent Farm. Therefore any ask, or ideas about getting relief for a school that can't have mobiles to be a little more under capacity at the onset to prevent more kids in classrooms as opposed to more mobiles has been squashed. I feel if the new school was allowed to speak at these meetings, they may have a fighting chance in standing up for their potential overcrowding, much like Vincent Farm has at every meeting.

If we are really doing the right thing for all, wouldn't make sense to leave capacity at the school that can't have mobiles? It is proven that larger classrooms are much more detrimental to a child's development than mobile units. This has also been proven locally by the performance of both Chapel Hill and Vincent Farm with the use of mobiles.

If you read all the email and survey traffic it is apparent that 60-70% of all responses are from PB30 (Parkside) and PB9 (Fieldcrest). PB30's argument is pretty strong as is Fieldcrest. PB30 feels they can walk to school, they are well diverse, part of the community, may be redistricted soon, and put the new school close to capacity. Fieldcrest is concerned about overcrowding Vincent Farm and promises that were made by realtors and builders (Ryan Homes). All of this information is public record per the emails and survey results.

Assuming the Perry Area sees even a fraction of the growth it has seen in prior years, all of these schools will be overcrowded in 5 years anyway. The new school will be trapped with large classrooms or having to redistrict. Forcing the same kids to change schools 2 times during their formative years.

Suggestion: The solution I would like to propose would be to use Option B which apparently is liked by the majority.

-Add PB30 back to Chapel Hill. Leave everything else the same. This will allow the new school to not be at 98-100% capacity day one, more like 92%. Allow them to grow instead of having overfilled classrooms right away.

-This will leave Vincent Farm at 88% allowing for the excessive relief that they are fighting for, to account for the possible new construction (that has been halted for the moment), and to prepare for the additional relief they are getting in 2020.

-This will throw Chapel Hill back to about 108%, conforming closer to the average of schools in the area. This still would provide relief from the current structure. Chapel Hill wouldn't lose a neighborhood with 50-60% diversity, bringing up their 35% average. In addition, the way PB30 is designed the number of attendees will decrease over time given the age of the community. If you look at the enrollment numbers over the past 5 years, the community is at its peak. It will be more like 20 in the next few years.

-I realize the folks from Chapel Hill on the committee will fight this, but the new school can't speak up at that meeting. These schools will all be over capacity in the future, why not keep the one that can't have mobiles from having 30 kids in a class. I would much rather my children be in a mobile unit than in a classroom with 30 kids. I imagine every person on the committee would agree. Therefore, it would make sense to find a way to prevent this from happening in advance.

Hopefully the committee can see this as a way to meet 60%-70% of all feedback this far, taking care of the community's concerns. After all, a big part of this process should be the community's voice. They are the ones that paying the taxes to build these schools and have to live with this plan going forward. If the committee ignores the concerns of 60%-70% of the feedback, it doesn't feel very democratic to me.

If anyone on the committee would like to hear some of the voice of the new school that isn't being heard, I urge you to reach out to me directly.
Craig Blinke

NE Elementary Community Boundary Study Public Email Log: 11/17/17 to 11/27/17

Date: 11/22/2017, 0815 hrs

Name: Craig Blinke

I would like to debunk the slide from the most recent presentation in regards to the safety of turning right on the Honeygo and left onto Joppa when taking kids from PB30 to the new school. I don't believe the consultant should opine on this unless a full safety study has been done. A police officer was out front of our neighborhood from 3-5pm on 11/20. The officer gave 12 tickets in this time frame. One of the speeds was over 74 mph and the officer couldn't even catch them. This is a very random sample. Could you imagine if he had been there all day. These tickets and accidents in the area are public record. I would think that when conducting a study around safety, speed and prior accidents would be the most pertinent information when arguing a route is safe.

What makes that route the most unsafe is the other drivers, not the bus. If a car is driving 74mph and a bus turns in front of it and then changes lanes, there is a concern that the car could go under the bus. If the bus were to stay in the slow lane, this is less of a concern. It would make sense to put down speed strips to understand really how fast folks go on Honeygo. It is not the average speed of 50mph that scares us, it is the outlier every couple of minutes that is driving closer to 70. You can't drive a route once and see this. A real study needs to be done. I recommend the consultant, have an appropriate study done if we are to tell the committee to not be concerned about certain communities concerns. After all, part of this process is the represent communities, not call the myth busters for half way done safety tests. If an appropriate study can't be provided, the prior slide from the most recent meeting in regards to PB30 bus turn safety should be recanted.

Craig A. Blinke, Jr.

Date: 11/26/2017, 1419 hrs

Name: Lisa Colon

Hello I am writing to express my concern over the boundary change for our neighborhood. As a resident of PB9, I am greatly in favor of option B. There are many reasons that I believe we should be redistricted to Chapel Hill. As new students to Vincent Farm my children are 2 of almost 1000 students. They have experienced limited bathroom space, cafeteria space as well as classroom space. My 4th grader is in a trailer and does not even have a locker. She has to carry all of her supplies with her everyday.

Because of the school size, there is limited outdoor space and if additional trailers are needed there will be even less space. My youngest who is in 3rd grade doesn't even eat lunch until 1:40 in the afternoon and is usually starving by lunchtime.

Please consider option B as the final decision for planning block PB9.

Thank you for your time Lisa

Lisa Colón |Operations Associate