

Montgomery County Council Public Hearing – March 7, 2006 (DRAFT)

Subject: Seven Locks Elementary School **Budget Requests and Inspector General's Report**

Statement for the Record:

- **Against School Board Request for Special Appropriation for Seven Locks Replacement School on Kendale Road”**
- **For CIP amendment proposed by Council Member Denis to build new school on current Seven Locks site**
- **For strong County Council follow-up on the findings and recommendations in the Inspector General's “Seven Locks School Projects” Report**

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Good Evening, Mr. President and Members of the County Council. I am Rodney Tanner. I am the father of Alexandra, a kindergarten student at Seven Locks Elementary School. I am also the father of Zachary and Cameron – I hope your actions tonight will allow them to attend Seven Locks Elementary School in the coming years.

I ask that you unanimously oppose the special appropriations for the Seven Locks replacement school on Kendale Road.

Councilmembers, Seven Locks Elementary school is part of my community. I purchased my home 3 years ago because we wanted to live in a community integrated with its elementary school. I want our children to take full advantage our elementary school, and my wife and I want to be as involved as we can – and we can do this because Seven Locks is part of our neighborhood. I love every opportunity I have to walk my daughter to school. Our children love playing in the school playfields. In fact, we plan to enroll our kids in soccer class held in the school playfields.

Councilmembers, as representatives of the county I understand you face a significant decision regarding this special appropriations – but I suggest to you, that this decision may be simpler then it appears. I ask you councilmembers, who are the winners if you proceed with the special appropriation and build the replacement school at Kendale? I know the children at Seven Locks Elementary are not the winners, Montgomery County is not the winner – I dare say to my friends and neighbors from Potomac Elementary School – you are not the winners either, and I tell you councilmembers, my friends in this room from the Seven Locks Elementary community – we are definitely not the winners.

Who can win when the replacement elementary school will:

- Compromise one communities needs in favor of another
- Have excessive costs, that have been clearly articulated in the inpector general report
- Have less usable land for the children
- Lack parking to support full parent participation in school activities
- Be built on the false premise of Seven Locks Community support
- And more important then any other consideration, be less safe for our children
 - There will be no sidewalks or streetlights on Kendale
 - The road is highly curved, and narrow, making every trip down this road by parents, schoolbuses or residents a safety hazard
 - This narrow road barely allows two buses to pass
 - The road is known to flood and ice over, as it is part of a flood area

Councilmembers, ultimately, the price for building Kendale far exceeds the \$3 million appropriations - there have already been three serious accidents in front of the proposed facility, and two children fatalities in the area – councilmembers, what price are we willing to pay for this new school? I ask that you oppose the special appropriations for the replacement school.