

## Donaldson Run Civic Association

February 27, 2024

Mark Schwartz  
County Manager  
Arlington County  
2100 Clarendon Boulevard, Suite 302  
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Mark:

On behalf of the Donaldson Run Civic Association (DRCA), we are writing to express our concerns about the substantial delay in responding to our requests – submitted over a year ago now – to address the serious safety issues at the crosswalk between Lorcom and Vacation Lanes, close to Dorothy Hamm Middle School (DHMS).

Many parents of DHMS students have spoken out in favor of enhanced safety measures at this crosswalk. In 2019, a parent group in the neighborhood collected over 200 signatories to a petition seeking such measures. DRCA residents have expressed similar concerns. In September 2022, responding to these concerns in connection with staff request for comments on the speed limit in this area, DRCA forwarded to staff specific neighborhood suggestions for addressing the problem. When the staff responded a month later directing DRCA to address these suggestions instead in a request for a Transportation/Safety Investigation, DRCA promptly did so. In this request, DRCA noted the high-volume traffic on Lorcom Lane, which makes it difficult for cars or pedestrians to cross Lorcom when on Vacation Lane. This has become a greater concern given the influx of student walkers to Hamm since the school's establishment several years ago. DRCA included in its request for study a look at whether "HAWK" signal or other specific measures were warranted.

More recently, a number of parents in the neighborhood have submitted additional Transportation Safety Investigation requests, which we understand have now been appended to DRCA's effort. In addition, DHMS Principal Ellen Smith has voiced to your staff her support for enhanced safety measures at this intersection, given the danger it poses for Hamm's students. She has not been successful in her efforts. Finally, just this month we learned of an incident at the crosswalk in which the 5-year-old brother of a Taylor student was nearly hit by a car crossing the street after the family dropped off his brother at school.

In response to DRCA's recent inquiry, we have been informed by County staff that the investigation is still ongoing and is now with the Operations Engineering team for analysis and review. We are told that this final step of the process will conclude within the next three months. In light of the urgency of this matter and the lengthy time since our original requests,

we urge you to act expeditiously on this investigation about potential additional safety measures, so that any appropriate steps may be taken during this school year. Here is a specific area where we would request your help to address the larger issue of the need for better coordination between County and APS staffs.

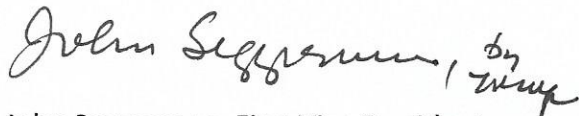
We should note that there are two distinct crosswalks on either side of Vacation Lane that walkers use to cross Lorcom. Hamm walker students use both of these crosswalks, both at the morning arrival time (just before 7:50am) and also during the large departure window beginning at 2:30pm and lasting until 4pm or so. Some students have after-school activities and some don't, so the steady stream of departing students over a long period renders the effective use of an afternoon crossing guard unrealistic.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Bill Richardson  
President  
Donaldson Run Civic Association



John Seggerman, First Vice President  
Donaldson Run Civic Association