**Talking Points for the 9/14/22 Urban Design Commission Meeting**

**Introduction:** Anchorage’s Urban Design Commission (UDC) has the ability, authority, and obligation to promote excellent project design within Anchorage. It receives comments from the public and a report from Muni planners (linked [here](https://www.muni.org/CityViewPortal/planning/Status?planningId=17519)) before members decide whether the UDC should approve, approve with conditions, or disapprove projects or project changes. The UDC’s decision is based on compliance with Anchorage’s Comprehensive Plan (*Anchorage 2020*)and the Title 21 Land Use Code.

Here is the [agenda](https://meetings.muni.org/AgendaOnline/Documents/ViewDocument/Urban_Design_Commission_-_September_14%2C_2022_4833_Agenda_9_14_2022_6_30_00_PM.pdf?meetingId=4833&documentType=Agenda&itemId=undefined&publishId=undefined&isSection=false) for the September 14th meeting at 6:30 pm at Loussac. If you cannot testify in person on 9/14, you can submit written comments [here](https://www.muni.org/PZComments/?casenum=2022-0024). As you will see when you click the link, many supporters of the proposed school design have submitted short comments so if you can, please do so as well.

To testify via telephone, you must email the Urban Design Commission at [**PlanningPhoneTestimony@anchorageak.gov**](mailto:PlanningPhoneTestimony@anchorageak.gov) by 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday, the day of the meeting.  Please provide your Name, Phone Number, and Agenda Item Number/Title [i.e., Case 2022-0024]. The Subject Line should read “Phone Testimony.” The Secretary will phone you at the number you have provided. You will have 3 minutes to provide testimony on each item you wish to speak on or 5 minutes for group representatives. **PLEASE DO NOT EMAIL CASE COMMENTS TO THIS EMAIL.**

**Points for Oral or Written Comments**

**What We Want:** A school on the north side of the site; no onsite, non-staff parking to maximize greenspace; and multiple pickup/dropoff locations to disperse traffic. With the school bond failure in April, there is time to develop a new, better, design prior to construction.

**General**

* Neighborhood residents, students’ parents, and Inlet View staff all want a high-quality facility that serves students and the community well.
* The existing school was located on the north portion of the site for good reasons: it is the sunniest location which is important for Northern city design, the school does not shade the playground, the south portion of the site is wetter which makes it a poor and expensive area for construction (requiring rerouting groundwater – not just stormwater - away from nearby homes), and there is no road separating that portion of the site from adjacent homes.
* School pickups and dropoffs currently occur at three locations which disperses traffic. According to the Anchorage Traffic Department, the new traffic design would increase congestion by forcing school vehicles to use a single, often icy, exit from the neighborhood. The rationale by the department for approval is that it would be no worse than congestion at other Anchorage schools. It is unacceptable and poor policy to worsen traffic congestion in the neighborhood.
* The proposed school design explicitly favors those driving to the school rather than students who walk or ride bicycles. That makes no sense in this urban neighborhood in 2022.
* Current school staff parking lots are not full and the neighborhood’s wide streets can accommodate parking for special events. The proposed design would reduce usable greenspace by 23% and would increase noise in the neighborhood at all hours in the winter due to snow removal from the enormous parking lot.
* Students on the east side of Inlet View would need to cross a parking lot to access the school, decreasing their safety.
* ASD did not involve neighbors without children at the school until it was too late to change the proposed design. There is still time to remedy that.

Questions? Contact Lois Epstein, [loisepstein@gmail.com](mailto:loisepstein@gmail.com) or 907 748-0448