FENN

Where Boys Thrive

July 31, 2020

To the NRC,

Given the nature of some of the public comments at the last two hearings, Fenn School felt it was appropriate to respectfully offer our perspective to the Commission on some of these matters. While this brief narrative is by no means an attempt to capture everything Fenn School is doing in the area of sustainability and environmental and outdoor education, we appreciate that not everything we do is understood by our neighbors and we could do better at sharing more about what Fenn is doing and thinking about doing when we have anything really valid and true to share.

Fenn is dedicated to our environmental and outdoor education program, including have a year round Director of Sustainability for the last 5+years. We are dedicated to educating our students and campers about the natural world.

We understand the interest in Fenn's future plans for this property. Below we share the following notes about Fenn's North Campus and a few additional comments specifically about the dock.

North Campus

- In 2019 Fenn purchased 17.73 Acres, including 676 and 712 Monument Street.
- Currently, Fenn is selling 712 Monument Street as a residence and three-acre parcel and has maintained the relationship with the renters of 676 Monument Street.
- Fenn anticipates that the remaining land may be used in the future as athletic fields, which could free up some space on campus to meet other needs. Academic buildings are anticipated to remain on the core campus adjacent to Carr Road. Any future alterations on the North Campus will require review by the NRC.
- Currently, the students can walk to the field on a path across Fenn property from the core campus to the North Campus for academic studies, including science and the arts, and wilderness skills, and outdoor time and a perimeter cross country running course. Our plan for the last two years, as we have actively used the property, including the riverfront, has always been to teach boys about being outdoors and building respect for and teaching boys about protecting the natural resources around us, and we do that in many, many ways. We have a deep desire to get the boys outside and active and engaged with nature. We teach boys that when we are going outside for a long time, we go to the bathroom ahead of time. We have discussed adding 1-2 portapotties up by our parking area by Monument Street as those things need to be serviced, but we have no plans for making any such request within any of the NRC's jurisdiction.
- The School is committed to respecting the wetlands and assumed the responsibility of completing the order of conditions imposed by the NRC for previous work on-site and has incorporated on-site wetlands education into the student curriculum.

Dock

- The dock will be used to safely allow students to enter and exit canoes and to obtain water samples under faculty supervision.
- Another important purpose of the dock design is to provide another outdoor classroom space to make sure our boys are connected to and engaged with their environment, getting the boys on the water.

- Access to the canoes by students will be on foot on Fenn property. Fenn School students, campers, faculty, staff, administrators, and trustees, as well as certain other neighbors, have been granted access to our property and the river.
- Canoes and the dock system will be stored offseason outside the 100' wetlands line. The dock can be manually removed by adults (no mechanical equipment required).
- A Gator, four-wheel vehicle, may be used to provide handicap accessibility and maintenance
- No dredging is required. No planned boathouse (although one existed on the river on this property for decades, was actually wheeled down Monument Street to be Fenn School's first Dining Hall. This property was formerly three school properties and included playing fields and tennis courts and buildings.)
- No gas or motor powered boats/vehicles will be used by Fenn School.

Environmental education research shows that we need to adopt a few different strategies for creating adult environmental stewards, based on the cognitive and emotional development stage that a child is at when we have them with us. Right now, for our elementary and middle school students, simply exposure to natural environments and positive engagement with the outdoor world is one of the things that is needed. What better way to get a kid to love and then respect nature than to get him out on the water, in the field, at a young age? Fenn's approach is very consistent with this type of "environmental psychology" that suggests getting people exposed to nature and the environment will lead to them feeling a connection to it. By being connected to nature people will have a better appreciation of it and desire to preserve, conserve and restore it.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of The Fenn School,

David A. Platt
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