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3 **McLean Citizens Association Resolution**  
4 **McLean Central Park Master Plan Revised Development Concept**  
5 **July 7, 2021**  
6

7 **Whereas**, McLean Central Park is the McLean community’s predominant local park and is  
8 highly valued for its natural and open green space as well as its recreation facilities; and  
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10 **Whereas**, the development of the current area consisting of McLean Central Park, Dolley  
11 Madison Library, and the McLean Community Center was an early goal of the McLean  
12 Citizens Association (“MCA”); and  
13

14 **Whereas**, In 1995 MCA pressed the County to acquire the 18-acre floodplain tract with  
15 Park bond money, began the drive for a new Dolley Madison Library urging the Board of  
16 Supervisors to select a site for the library nearby, and in 1966, urged that options on land  
17 acquired near the library and park be acquired for construction of a community center,  
18 envisioning creation of a “civic campus” (the “Civic Campus”); and  
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20 **Whereas**, because of MCA’s longstanding history in support of the creation of the Civic  
21 Campus with McLean Central Park providing needed green and recreational space as a local  
22 park and within the Civic Campus, the MCA seeks that McLean Central Park uses be  
23 balanced with the other functions in the Civic Campus; and  
24

25 **Whereas**, in 2013, the Fairfax County Park Authority (the “FCPA”) adopted a Revised  
26 McLean Central Park Master Plan (the “2013 Revised Master Plan”) following extensive  
27 public comment and outreach that took place over the course of an entire year, including the  
28 statement that “Hearing the voice of the public is a key element in the Park Authority’s  
29 approach to developing a park master plan;” and  
30

31 **Whereas**, based on the response to the community outreach efforts made by FCPA in 2013,  
32 the MCA Board of Directors (the “MCA Board”) approved a Resolution on May 1, 2013  
33 conditionally supporting the 2013 Revised Master Plan; and  
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35 **Whereas**, on May 24, 2021, the FCPA held a public webinar to release a revised  
36 Development Concept for McLean Central Park (the “Revised Development Concept”); and  
37

38 **Whereas**, the FCPA provided little advance community notification of the May 24, 2021  
39 webinar at which it presented the Revised Development Concept and announced a 30-day  
40 comment period ending June 25, 2021; and  
41

42 **Whereas**, on June 3, 2021, the MCA Board of Directors approved and sent a letter to the  
43 FCPA providing its views on the Revised Development Concept (the “MCA Letter”); and  
44

45 **Whereas**, on June 9, 2021, the FCPA responded to the MCA Letter (the “FCPA Response”)  
46 noted that the Revised Development Plan is “very early in the conceptual stage,” extended

47 the comment period four weeks until July 30, 2021, and noted the possibility of further  
48 extensions as needed “to allow for maximum feedback;” and

49

50 **Whereas**, the MCA Board appreciates receiving the FCPA’s Response, the extension of the  
51 comment period, and the FCPA’s stated commitment to maximum feedback; and

52

53 **Whereas**, on June 15, 2021, the MCA’s Environmental, Parks & Recreation Committee (the  
54 “Committee”) held a virtual meeting at which FCPA staff provided some additional  
55 information and answered questions from Committee members and other participants (the  
56 “June 15<sup>th</sup> Meeting”); and

57

58 **Whereas**, at the June 15, 2021 Committee meeting, FCPA staff reiterated their desire to  
59 obtain comprehensive feedback from the community and move forward with community  
60 support and suggested that it would consider a further extension of the comment period if  
61 the community feedback process reasonably requires additional time; and

62

63 **Whereas**, as noted in the MCA Letter, a number of significant changes have occurred and  
64 are continuing to occur in the local environment of McLean Central Park since the release of  
65 the 2013 Revised Master Plan and the prior Resolution of the MCA on the 2013 Revised  
66 Master Plan, including the nearly three year effort of County Planning and Development  
67 Staff and a community task force resulting in amendments to the Fairfax County  
68 Comprehensive Plan with respect to the McLean Community Business Center (the “CBC”),  
69 which, among other effects, contemplates and encourages redevelopment of McLean for a  
70 much more urban downtown, with significant increases in residential population, density,  
71 building heights, and traffic congestion; and

72

73 **Whereas**, McLean has experienced dramatic growth since 2013 and there has been  
74 substantial and increased urbanization of nearby Tysons including a 34% increase in  
75 Tyson’s housing stock since 2010, resulting in increased traffic congestion and increased  
76 use of McLean parks by residents of Tysons (and an additional 36% growth in Tyson’s  
77 housing stock is projected by 2025); and

78

79 **Whereas**, additional significant changes since 2013 include heightened awareness and  
80 concern for the ecological sensitivity of McLean’s natural areas, and areas of McLean  
81 Central Park that are within the designated, protected Chesapeake Bay Watershed Resource  
82 Protection Area, and development in nearby parks including Clemyjontri Park and Langley  
83 Forks Park; and

84

85 **Whereas**, the FCPA should analyze the significant impact these changes have had and will  
86 have on the function, design, and appropriate balance between the built and the natural  
87 environment; and

88

89 **Whereas**, unlike the community input process that accompanied the 2013 Revised Master  
90 Plan, and despite the significant proposed changes set forth in the Revised Development  
91 Concept, no prior communications or discussions concerning the Revised Development  
92 Concept were held, scheduled or contemplated with other major stakeholders, including  
93 affected adjacent and nearby neighborhoods or any of the businesses, private organizations  
94 and individual donors that have provided funding for the McLean Central Park’s existing  
95 gazebo (the “McLean Central Park Gazebo”); and

96

97 **Whereas**, while the FCPA Response notes the need for a balance between green space with  
98 the built environment, MCA believes that the Revised Development Concept is  
99 overbalanced on the side of built environment, replacing highly valued green space in a  
100 central location with more built environment, particularly since much of the McLean  
101 Central Park lies in the protected Chesapeake Bay Resource Protection Area and the  
102 Revised Development Concept proposes changes that would transform this central green  
103 area into a more developed, built environment with significant loss of natural space and tree  
104 canopy; and

105  
106 **Whereas**, the Revised Development Concept proposes the introduction of new park  
107 elements for which demand has not recently been articulated, documented, or even surveyed  
108 in the community, such as the proposed amphitheater, bocce courts and game tables, while  
109 neglecting needed maintenance of existing facilities such as tennis courts, and features that  
110 were removed without community notice, outreach or comment, such as disc golf, which,  
111 depending on an appropriate current study, may or may not be appropriate and desirable;  
112 and

113  
114 **Whereas**, the Revised Development Concept does not address the need for timely and  
115 properly funded maintenance of many existing McLean Central Park features and facilities  
116 such as playgrounds, trails, and landscaping, and allowance for invasive plant (particularly  
117 bamboo) control; and

118  
119 **Whereas**, in its discussion of the Needs Assessment for McLean Central Park, the 2013  
120 Revised Master Plan does not identify a need for the proposed amphitheater to be located at  
121 the corner of Ingleside Road and Old Dominion Boulevard to accommodate approximately  
122 200 attendees; and

123  
124 **Whereas**, historically, the community created a ‘Town Green’ with a fountain that was  
125 replaced by a playground in the mid-1990’s where the McLean Central Park Gazebo was to  
126 be located in order to realize the original historic purpose of the Town Green as a public  
127 gathering and performing space; and

128  
129 **Whereas**, the McLean Central Park Gazebo, even located at its current location, satisfies the  
130 community’s need for outdoor performance space with its outdoor summer concerts and  
131 performances and enjoys strong connections to the McLean community; and

132  
133 **Whereas**, the recently expanded McLean Community Center within the Civic Campus  
134 provides year-round performance space; and

135  
136 **Whereas**, the McLean Project for the Arts has been working with FCPA on a significant  
137 redevelopment of Clemyjontri Park in McLean, 5 minutes away, for artist studios and  
138 related uses which also may include performing arts presentations; and

139  
140 **Whereas**, additional large scale performance venues exist within a 10-15 minute drive of  
141 McLean, including Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts and the Kennedy  
142 Center for the Performing Arts which two years ago completed a major building program  
143 creating new small event spaces and performance halls; and

144  
145 **Whereas**, the proposed amphitheater also appears redundant in light of the soon to open  
146 Capital One Hall complex only 2 miles away from the McLean Central Park which will

147 include 1) the Perch Amphitheater, an outdoor amphitheater on the roof deck of Capital One  
 148 Hall with a seating capacity of 230 (almost identical in size, appearance and intended uses to  
 149 the amphitheater proposed in the Revised Development Concept), 2) the Vault, with seating  
 150 capacity of 225 and which is designed for intimate performances, plays and concert (an  
 151 almost identical facility to the amphitheater except indoors), and 3) the Terrace, with seating  
 152 capacity of 180; and

153

154 **Whereas**, Capital One has stated that these facilities will be made available for Fairfax  
 155 County community organizations and public schools and has made arrangements with  
 156 ArtFairfax to manage Fairfax County community organizations and public schools' access  
 157 and use of the various venues at Capital One Hall complex facilities<sup>1</sup>; and

158

159 **Whereas**, the proposed McLean Central Park amphitheater's Elm Street extension and  
 160 "drop-off-pick up" turnaround would require the removal of dozens of mature trees; and

161

162 **Whereas**, the location of the proposed amphitheater and its associated uses, adjacent to  
 163 numerous residential homes in a residential neighborhood, would further adversely impact  
 164 the residential environment that currently exists there, and would create additional noise and  
 165 cut-through traffic issues; and

166

167 **Whereas**, the proposed Amphitheater's major point of access is the intersection of Dolley  
 168 Madison Boulevard and Ingleside Avenue, already challenged by its configuration and  
 169 Ingleside Avenue's use as a cut through route for afternoon and evening rush hour  
 170 commuter traffic; and

171

172 **Whereas**, the Revised Development Concept does not address the need for parking to  
 173 accommodate the proposed amphitheater's event demand and there was no analysis  
 174 provided in the public webinar to indicate that existing parking in the McLean Community  
 175 Resources Campus would suffice at the times of the proposed amphitheater's expected  
 176 usage, and provides for no additional parking other than 13 accessible parking spaces at the  
 177 proposed drop-off; and

178

179 **Whereas**, the Revised Development Concept does not address the need and proposed  
 180 solutions for bathroom facilities for the several hundred people who would attend events at  
 181 the proposed amphitheater as well as the other amenities planned for McLean Central Park;  
 182 and

183

184 **Whereas**, the Revised Development Concept reflects a County desire to seek increased and  
 185 enhanced usage of the McLean Central Park but does not address the need or options for  
 186 creating or enhancing safe pedestrian access to the McLean Central Park from the County's  
 187 planed redevelopment of the CBC discussed above (which was not addressed in the McLean  
 188 CBC Plan revision) and serious consideration needs to be given to construction of an ADA-  
 189 compliant pedestrian and bicycle access bridge to allow safe crossing of Dolley Madison  
 190 Boulevard to the McLean Central Park and the rest of the Civic Campus even in the absence  
 191 of the proposed amphitheater; and

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<sup>1</sup> See <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/news/capital-one-hall-will-spotlight-community-arts-tysons#sthash.eez0E2k6.pqf4sb1R.dpbs>.

193 **Whereas**, the MCA Board is aware that at least one close-by homeowner association has  
 194 advised the FCPA of their opposition to the proposed amphitheater on various grounds  
 195 including traffic, noise, availability of nearby alternative performing arts venues, and lack of  
 196 analysis or demonstrated need; and

197

198 **Whereas**, the MCA Board is aware that many in the local community have expressed  
 199 opposition to the proposed reduction in tennis courts at the McLean Central Park in light of  
 200 the strong and growing demand for these facilities among tennis and pickle ball players and  
 201 the lack of adequate public court facilities elsewhere in McLean; and

202

203 **Whereas**, many in the local community have also expressed support for a dog park at  
 204 McLean Central Park as no dog parks currently exist in McLean and the draft 2020 FCPA  
 205 Dog Park Study recommended McLean as a potential site for a future dog park.

206

207 **Therefore, be it resolved that**, consistent with the FCPA’s stated commitment for a “robust  
 208 community outreach program” in order to “maximum feedback,” the MCA requests that the  
 209 FCPA further extend the comment period beyond July 30, 2021 and conduct a full  
 210 communication and coordination process concerning the Revised Development Concept  
 211 proposed changes with stakeholders comparable to, and consistent with the spirit and intent  
 212 of the process that accompanied the 2013 Revised Master Plan; and

213

214 **Therefore, be it further resolved that**, the full communication and coordination process  
 215 for community input should include a multi-strategy approach with components including,  
 216 but not limited to, a community-wide survey and notices posted in McLean Central Park  
 217 which, if done in a considered and thorough manner, will necessarily require the further  
 218 extension of the comment period; and

219

220 **Therefore, be it further resolved that**, the MCA requests that, prior to finalization of the  
 221 Revised Development Concept that the FCPA, together with other County Departments not  
 222 only receive and consider public comments but conduct thoughtfully planned and focused  
 223 needs analysis and traffic, parking, noise, and light studies of each of the planned new or  
 224 changed amenities, as well as consideration and impact of bathroom facilities and solutions  
 225 that would be necessary for or related to all planned new or changed amenities; and

226

227 **Therefore, be it further resolved that**, MCA opposes the amphitheater proposal unless  
 228 there is a demonstrated need for this facility and, requests that prior to finalization of the  
 229 Revised Development Concept, the FCPA consider improving existing resources within the  
 230 park, including the Gazebo; and

231

232 **Therefore, be it further resolved that**, the portion of the McLean Central Park that was  
 233 preliminarily suggested in the Revised Development Concept for the proposed  
 234 Amphitheater should be considered instead for other activities or retained as passive  
 235 recreational space; and

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237 **Therefore, be it further resolved that**, the MCA requests that actions taken to advance the  
 238 Revised Development Concept recognize the increasing importance of safe ADA-compliant  
 239 pedestrian and bicycle access and connectivity between the McLean Central Park and the  
 240 other portions of the Civic Campus and the CBC to enhance the attractiveness and  
 241 utilization of the McLean Central Park and that the FCPA advocate for and work  
 242 cooperatively with other County departments and the State Department of Transportation as

243 required or appropriate to construct an ADA-compliant pedestrian access bridge to allow  
 244 safe crossing of Dolley Madison Boulevard to the McLean Central Park and the other  
 245 portions of the Civic Campus; and

246

247 **Therefore, be it further resolved that,** consistent with FCPA's 2013 stated commitments  
 248 to keeping McLean Central Park as a "green oasis" and that "future development within the  
 249 park should seek to minimize additional stresses to the environment while looking for  
 250 opportunities to support and enrich the ecosystem," MCA requests that systematic removal  
 251 of invasive species, natural landscaping, native tree planting, and other enhanced ecological  
 252 services play a significant role in the Revised Development Concept; and

253

254 **Therefore, be it finally resolved that,** the MCA requests that the Revised Development  
 255 Concept include a commitment to improved maintenance of existing McLean Central Park  
 256 facilities and features and provide estimates for long-term maintenance costs for any  
 257 planned new facilities and features constructed or redeveloped in the McLean Central Park.

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260 *Approved by the MCA Board of Directors*

261 *Date: July 7, 2021*

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263 McLean Citizens Association, PO Box 273, McLean, Virginia 22101

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265 CC: Supervisor John Foust, Dranesville District, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors  
 266 John Ulfelder, Dranesville Planning Commission  
 267 Jane Edmondson, Chief of Staff to Supervisor Foust  
 268 Timothy Hackman, Dranesville District Representative to the Fairfax County Park  
 269 Authority Board  
 270 Sara Baldwin, Acting Executive Director, Fairfax County Park Authority  
 271 Paul Shirey, Manager, Project Management Branch, Fairfax County Park Authority  
 272 Adam Wynn, Project Manager & Senior Planner, Planning & Development Branch,  
 273 Fairfax County Park Authority  
 274 Judy Pederson, Senior Information Officer, Fairfax County Park Authority  
 275 Clerk to the Board of Supervisors  
 276 Clerk to the Planning Commission  
 277 Ben Wiles, Dranesville Supervisor's Staff

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