



Morrisville Town Council

Regular Meeting

March 13, 2018

The following information is a transcription of comments made during Public Address at the March 13, 2018 Town Council Meeting:

7. Public Address

- a. Thank you, Mayor. I am *Steve Lauderdale*. I am a citizen of Morrisville. I have lived at *2104 Glade Valley Lane* since 2010. I came here tonight to express my support for closer middle and high schools for our community. I realize that the Wake County Board of Education is the governing body for our schools. I also realize that land in Morrisville has become more expensive than in some other parts of the county. At the same time, that suggests there are, or will be, higher property appraisals and taxes than in some other parts of the county. So, I do not believe that residents living in areas with high land costs, and by extension, higher real estate appraisals, should be denied community schools. So, I strongly encourage the Town Council to weigh in with the Board of Education. Moreover, I encourage the Town Council to partner with the Board of Education to do what is needed to bring a middle and high school to Morrisville, even if it means helping to pay for what is now more expensive land or having a smaller than standard size campus. For example, without a football field. My perception is that the cost of land has gone up during the last four years of inaction and there is still time to fix this. Let me add that I do not have kids or grandkids here. My wife and I moved here. I have no relatives in North Carolina. However, I care about the wellbeing of our community, even though I do not have kids in the school system. I am glad we have an aquatics and fitness center, even though I don't use it. I'm glad we have a cricket pitch, even though I don't use it and I don't follow cricket. So I strongly support the need for community schools, even though I don't have kids in the system. Please work out a deal with the Board of Education to address this issue. Thank you.
- b. My name is *Jennifer Brevia*. I am here to demand that the Town Council work with Wake County Public Schools to bring a middle and high school to our town. Morrisville is the only town in Wake County without a middle or high school. I understand we are a county-wide school district, but our town and the areas surrounding it are growing at a great pace. The children of Morrisville have long bus rides that are only going to be increasing with the population growth around us. I live in Kitts Creek. My base middle school is East Cary, 25 minutes from my home. My friends went to a PTA meeting at East Cary. There were 6 people there. There are 900 students at that school. Why are not more parents there? Is it the traffic? Is it the distance to get there? The biggest indicator to have a successful school is to have parent involvement. Wake County Public Schools is opening up new schools but they are opening them up as traditional. Austin Ridge Middle School will be 11 minutes from my house. But, the West Cary School Board representatives are telling West Cary families it will be traditional. There will be no room for Morrisville. Breckenridge got ousted out of Mills Park Middle because parents in West Cary would not allow that school to go year-round to fit them in. Now Breckenridge is sent to West Cary Middle. This trend is only going to continue. Even the area around East Cary is growing with IKEA coming in and Wegmans coming in. Will there be room for Morrisville? The Town Council wants to build a community with an artificial downtown which is basically a mini Park

West. This does not build community. It generates tax revenue and it builds, brings in campaign donations, but it does not give residents a sense of belonging. Schools build community. Morrisville has so much going for it, a convenient location, but really what Town Council is forgetting, the best asset Morrisville has is the people. The town has a highly educated population, families that care about education. They want community schools. They want schools they can be involved in. They don't want their kids being bussed away to Cary's leftover schools. Cary land-banked for schools. Morrisville did not. We cannot just throw our hands up and say oh well. School campuses can be smaller. Town Council can go to Wake County Public Schools for us. Town Council can rezone land. Town Council can amend the UDOs for slower growth. We have so much money in Town reserves. Land purchases can be supplemented and amortized. We have AAA Town credit rating. I cannot think of a better investment than children of our town. I understand many on Town Council not to believe, do not believe that the average resident is concerned about schools because we do not usually come to these meetings. But look around. And you know where else we showed up? We showed up at the polls. And that's why we have a new mayor. And we'll show up at the polls again. And I hope you all represent us well and not just by us, not just by wearing blue. Thank you. (2120 Glade Valley Lane).

- c. Hi, I'm *Kathy Sales*, I live in the Kitts Creek community. I have lived there for nine years. I'm the HOA Board president and so I'm really involved in my community. I talk to my neighbors a lot. I'm another voice who lives here without kids. I don't have kids to go to the schools, but like Steve, I care a lot about our community, our town, and how the schools serve and don't serve the parents in Kitts Creek who, who are the ones I talk to the most. I have a number of friends that I made when I first moved to Kitts Creek that have moved away one, because the, their kids grew into getting to a point in elementary school where they started to discover what happens here when you start to go to middle school and high school, and we don't want that. We want people to come here and raise families here and live here for the duration of raising their kids and be part of the community and be invested here. When I grew up in Connecticut, we moved from Pennsylvania to Connecticut. My parents bought a smaller house that was more expensive in town that was farther away from my dad's new job because of the schools and that's what people do. It affects our property values, but almost more importantly it affects, well maybe more importantly, it affects community too. Jennifer hit on that a little bit and so did Steve. When I grew up, we, all of our elementary schools, fed to a middle school that fed to the high school. And when I went to school events, when I went to the town fireworks on the 4th of July, I knew all the people there, and they all knew me, and we knew the parents and the parents knew each other because we weren't sent to schools far and wide across the county. Another thing that I wanted to bring up, bring forward is we, the Town Council, has just spent a lot of time putting together a new theme and mission for Morrisville that says our tagline says that we're going to live connected and live well. I don't understand how we live connected if our students don't learn connected to us and to the town. I don't understand how we live connected if our kids go to all different schools and parents don't see each other at school events and that sort of thing. I'm not disparaging anything that the town has done. I think everything we're doing to put the community together is great but this is a main element that's missing. So, what do we want? I'll say what I've been hearing from my neighbors and what I want. We voted last November to disrupt the status quo of what was going in Morrisville and we're here tonight to do the same thing. We want some change as it relates to how the town is helping us. We understand the county system and everything but we want some change. And we want to partner with you. We want you to be on our team with us. We know that there's innovative solutions. We know that we can work together. We know solutions will exist if we work on finding them. We don't have to do it the old way. We have to produce, we have to do new things if we want to produce new things. What we've been doing so far has produced outcome that we have so let's find some new and let's do it together. We want fresh thinking. We want our Morrisville kids to go to Morrisville schools, and we want you guys to be on our team helping to lead that. And I want everybody that's here about this topic to stand up and show your blue

shirts and show your signs and show everybody that you care about this topic. Just stay up there so they can get photos. Thank you. (1209 Somers Drive)

- d. Hi, my name is *Ava Lynch*. I have lived in Morrisville for five years. I go to East Cary Middle School and I am in sixth grade. I want a middle school in Morrisville because I don't think that it is fair to not go to school with the same kids in my neighborhood. I would like to be in the same school as other kids because I would know the kids already and would be able to play outside more often with my friends. Our school is too far away and I can't be able to, and I can't play sports because I take the bus to my house. If I lived closer to school, then I would be able to play sports with the kids that are my age and some of my friends would be on my team so I would be able to play with more of them. If we had a closer school, then I wouldn't have to wake up as early and not be tired in school. Also, there are a lot of buses and cars driving to and from my school and it's hard to go places after school because of the traffic. If the construction workers are going to take down trees, it should be for something more useful, like more schools and not more houses. If families are going to move into Morrisville, then it's going to make the schools more crowded and some kids will have to be home-schooled. If they built a school, it would be better because the schools won't be as crowded and it will be a lot better for teachers so they don't have to have huge classrooms and a huge amount of students to look after. And a lot more jobs too. Thank you. (1028 Gamewell Lane)
- e. My name is *Kevin O'Connor*. I live at *1001 Hemby Ridge* in Kitts Creek Subdivision. Like Ava, my daughter is a student at East Cary Middle School, and as you heard from Jennifer and other speakers, that is our base school. It is twice as far from our home as four other schools in Cary, and the fact that it's in Cary is a problem. So, on an average day, my daughter spends 30 minutes on the bus. So that's an extra 15 minutes more than for the four other schools. That's an extra hour and 10 minutes per week that she's on the bus and all the other kids in Kitts Creek are on the bus, and if you do that over a school year, that's 42 to 60 extra hours that our kids are on a school bus and it's just not right. According to 2016 [population counts], Cary had a population of 162,000 people and they have six middle schools, or basically one middle school per every 27,000 people. Morrisville, according to the same statistic, has 24,800 people. We have zero middle schools. It's not right. Building a middle school in Morrisville won't help my daughter, but it will help other kids. So we need this, we need the council to work with the board to build schools. Think outside the box and get a school built for this town. Thank you.
- f. Hi, my name is *Donna Kostandy*. I'm in Kitts Creek at *2108 Glade Valley Lane*. And, I pinch myself every time I think about where we are in Morrisville. We're in the Research Triangle Park. We're in the home of innovation and the cutting edge of technology. Right? Right? I mean, how lucky are we to be here? So we're a young family. My son is in kindergarten and I started looking around and, oh my gosh, where is he going in five years? He's going to be sitting on a bus for hours and hours. And that's just not ok, that's not ok. And it makes me think, well, maybe we need to think about other locations, but I don't want to leave. I want to be here in the heart of innovation. So I'm asking you to use what's here. Use the technology and the resources that are here. Let's get creative. We're in the heart of innovation. Let's do this for our kids. Thank you.
- g. Hi, my name is *Porter Chesebro*, and I'm 11 years old and I live in Kitts Creek, *1332 Legendary Lane*. I'm here because I just wanted to say that [we] probably would need a high school in Morrisville. It's probably a good idea because it will definitely help everyone in Morrisville. So, to start off with, I would say, that the distance would definitely be, let's say closer. That the middle or high school would definitely be closer to students in Morrisville so they wouldn't have to take an hour bus ride. So I would think, for example, I was assigned to East Cary Middle School and when I take the bus, I know that's gonna take an hour long. Now if we build a middle and high school in Morrisville for the people that live in Morrisville that probably not gonna have to go, like, it's not gonna take as long. The bus ride's not gonna take as long. Also, I'd say

that my friends [I] have already made in elementary school are not going to the same middle school and probably not the same high school as I am if we didn't have a high school or a middle school. So I'm saying that if we do have a middle and high school then I can see my friends again and I wouldn't have to make new friends. Like, I'm not that kind of guy. I don't make new friends. Also, I've know that Morrisville is definitely making more houses in Morrisville, more houses and townhouses in Morrisville, and that also equals up to more kids. Now, more and more kids, preschoolers, middle schoolers, high schoolers even, elementary schoolers, they're all gonna grow up to be high schoolers, and middle schoolers, so building a high school and middle school in Morrisville is probably a great idea for them. It's gonna be closer, and you'd probably have the same friends. Thank you.

- h. Hi, my name is *Alex*, I am 8 years old. I will be in third grade next year. I will be in middle school in three years and I want to go to a school nearby in Morrisville. I want to be able to do team sports after school, and I won't be able to do [that] if the school is farther away. I also don't want to leave super early and get to school really tired. It shouldn't take so long to get to a high school or a middle school just because there isn't a school in Morrisville. In closing, my name is *Alex Mural* and I want a middle school and high school in Morrisville. Thank you. (*121 Heartsease Lane*)
- i. My name is *Aaron Kiefer*. I live in Kitts Creek neighborhood at *1349 Legendary Lane*. And I'm glad to see all the blue here. This is great to see the neighbors, the families representing. This is my first time here at the Town Council. I think it's a great cause that we're here to support and I'm glad to hear that you council members are looking at this so hard and considering this. I have a kindergartner. He's at Carpenter Elementary School and he loves it. And we love it because it's such a great school and it's so close by. You can jump on the bus and be there in 15 or 20 minutes. And riding the bus is one of the highlights for Eli. But, I want to mention East Cary. I think it's been mentioned about 10 times already so I'm going to jump to a couple of stats. And those are the numbers. We're right around 25,000 people here in Morrisville as you know, and the census says about 7,000 kids. So if you break that down, we have enough middle schoolers in Morrisville to basically fill Mills Park, at least by my estimations. We're talking over 1,000 middle school aged kids in the area. I wanted to share with you that local schools are for camaraderie, safety, efficiency and community. And that's a great way for Morrisville to step in those areas, is to build a school for the middle schoolers and the high schoolers. And high quality schools are probably the most compelling reason to be in a community in this area, and if there's not an option when we get to that point, we might have to consider a different location. We have lots of friends in Apex and Cary and we're a little bit envious of some of their schools that they have. And so I wanted to encourage you to help us invest in the future of our community and of our kids. Thank you.
- j. Good evening everyone. My name is *James Semmons*, and I live at Kitts Creek Subdivision at *1136 Survada Lane*. First, most of the comments that were made will shrink my comments down a lot because they've said a lot of things that I believe in. What Mr. Gray mentioned in the invocation that we want to believe in [is] inclusion and prosperity. And in order to be included, we need to have a community that allows that inclusion through the educational system. Right now, we are included into Cary, not into Morrisville. Our prosperity will grow, as a school, and around that community, around that educational foundation. Growth starts with family and education. A lot of people that own homes in this town, purchase their homes because of the educational system that Cary provides. But we know that we can have that same educational system for the citizens and the community here and rally around that middle school and that high school. It's, as the kids mentioned, it's through the sports. They cannot participate in sports if they're on the bus for 45 minutes. They will be considered outcasts. And as, as every town has across America, that school pride. The parents return back to those high schools as alumnus to encourage that growth, to encourage that future. Morrisville does not have a future, other than the elementary schools. And once we have that middle school and high school, most kids

remain in those schools. I do not have any children in the schools today. My kids are all in their 30s and 20s. But I do have grandchildren that live in Morrisville and I want to see them be able to stick around, stay around and have some sense of pride in their school. It also, when the town grows, and as Morrisville is growing at a cyclic rate, you have to have an infrastructure in order for that town to grow around. We are growing our police force, we are growing our fire departments. We also need to grow the schools to, to match that growth rate. The roads are going to be more congested as the town grows. So this 45 minute commute is going to turn into an hour, hour and a half commute for some of our kids, which takes away from that study time, which takes away from their social time, because they'll be sitting in traffic just like the rest of us who go to work. So I want to compound all those, the, the kids here who mentioned that they don't want to sit on a bus half their lives and bring that school to our community and allow our community to grow just like the other towns around us do. Thank you.

- k. Hi, my name is *Stephanie Chesebro*. I live at *1332 Legendary Lane* in Kitts Creek, and you've already met my oldest over there who's currently in fifth grade and is slated to go to East Cary. He obviously made a whole bunch of great points from a kids perspective and a lot of the other parents have made and people who don't have kids have made great points and a lot of them have actually been covered from what I was going to say. But one thing that I think hasn't really been discussed is the community, the sort of community feel. When you have schools in a community, you tend to support those schools so the local businesses will in turn support schools and then parents or people who have grandkids or kids who go to schools will then support those local businesses. So, in turn, it's actually going to generate more revenue for local businesses as much as getting support for the schools. You know for instance, they currently go to Morrisville so there's a lot of businesses who currently support Morrisville Elementary, just like any of the other schools. So if we have a school in our community, then those businesses will then get supported as well as supporting our local schools. So it's kind of building more of that community feel. Alternatively, when we first moved here, we rented. A lot of Morrisville are renters. A lot of those people who rent, you know, some of them want to end up staying in Morrisville and that's what we hope to end up building our community. But if they don't see that there's any reason to stay, if they are, are family planning, then they'll leave. And our community won't feel like a community. It'll feel transient. It'll feel like we have a bunch of renters, which is not what we want. We want a community feel. We want to feel like we all know each other and we're all good friends at fireworks and community events. You know, that's what anybody wants from a community. I guess, pretty basically everybody else has covered what most of the other stuff I was going to say just, just that community feel. I think that's really important. And that's the reason why we're here. That's the reason why a lot of people are still here and haven't moved. But I will say I've had a lot of friends who have moved because they've they are lacking that community feel. Education is really a top priority when it comes to buying a house.
- l. Alright. Hello, thanks for having us tonight, although I don't think you really had a choice. So I wanted to paint a picture for you, but my name is *Jennifer Therrien*. I live at *1321 Legendary Lane*, in Morrisville and I've been a resident for five years. I've been a resident of North Carolina for about 13 and started out renting in Morrisville before buying our first home in Apex, and we actually moved back to Morrisville to improve our commutes which is now just kind of funny because now our children's commutes are going to be much longer because of our decision to move closer to our jobs. And so, now thinking about that, for example my oldest is four and could go into kindergarten next year, but I'm really hoping we can see some work done on the middle schools and the high schools before he gets to those points and that's really why I'm here today. So, you know over the past 13 years living in North Carolina, I look at Apex and Morrisville, because I've lived in both right? And you know in Apex, they've seen a lot of the same changes as Morrisville. Both farmlands, both have booming populations, roads that needed improvement, and you know we've both grown in the same way. We have great shopping, we have great parks that you guys have put together for our kids. We have team

sports, and places to exercise, and there's one thing missing. You know they have a great downtown area, but before that downtown area came back together and was revitalized, they had a great school system too. And so I think that's really the only difference that we have there. And I really look at both of them in that way. There's also that sense of community that Stephanie was talking about in the neighborhood we used to live in there that I don't see quite as much in the neighborhood we live in here. So bringing it to the present time, we have all the conveniences, and then looking forward, think about five years from now. Land is going to be more expensive. There's going to be less of it. We're still going to have this problem and we're going to rely on other towns to solve that problem for us. Right now we have the opportunity to do something and prevent that from happening. I mean, think back five years ago. If we could've expanded Aviation or McCrimmon even larger than they are now and fixed the traffic problems before the traffic happened right? That would've been wonderful. We would have all gotten to work faster and our kids would have gotten to school faster. But right now we have the opportunity to make that same change for our kids and for the school system before it gets even more out of hand. So thanks for having us and thanks for the consideration.

- m. Hi, my name is *Advika* and I'm in fourth grade. I'm from [the] Kitts Creek neighborhood and I go to Sterling Montessori. The close proximity of this school gives me time to come home and do my home homework and it also lets me take part in activities and play outside with my neighbors. But my neighbors could not do the same. Most of them will have to go to East Cary and they will spend a lot of time coming home on buses. We need more schools in Morrisville, not in Cary or in Raleigh. Thank you. (*Advika Kolli, 1037 Oatney Ridge Lane*)
- n. Good evening Town Council Members, friends and families of Morrisville. Thank you for giving me this opportunity to voice our needs. I'm not a great public speaker but I'm here to make a point and voice my needs. Hopefully I can. My name is *Prathyusha*, and I'm resident of Kitts Creek neighborhood. As a working mother, I cannot stress the importance of proximity of schools and how much it helps in improving the quality of life. Given the socio-economic status of Morrisville, so many companies, so many good jobs, I am surprised to find us in a situation where I'm having to demand schools. Why [do] our children have to go to Cary or Raleigh for schools? Education is a very important factor in making or breaking a society. I have seen this first hand when we were living in Detroit. That is the reason why we moved to Morrisville. A small town, where I can give my children a great education, great proximity to work and school. I work at Deutsche Bank. I have great proximity to work, but I can't say the same for my kids. Proximity helps in raising more enriched individuals. My children currently do not have a middle school or a high school. Today, I know for a fact, talking to other moms, that I cannot provide the same quality of life as the kids living close to the schools can. As an immigrant, who's moved to this country 15 years ago, I never thought I would be finding myself in a situation where I'm going to be asking for schools. This is the one thing that attracted me to U.S., other than the jobs, of course, is education. I've gotten a great education. I've gotten a great masters here. But when I, when I first moved to this country, the first thing that struck me is how all children ride their bikes, walk to schools. They go to the same middle schools, they go to same high schools, just like Kathy Sales has pointed out. I bet a lot of you [are] parents here, Town Council members, you might have had the same thing when you were growing up. Can my children have it living in Morrisville? Probably not. Today, they cannot. Sadly, that might be a deterrent for me and others who are living in this community there, for, it would probably cause them to move away from this community to move to communities that can provide it. I go to Apex, I drive around Apex, I drive around Cary, and I look at schools. They're all so close together and I can see kids walking. I am envious [of] those kids because my kids can't do that. I am bussing them, I am, right now they go to Carpenter, which is 20 minutes of a bus ride for my children. It's fine now, but when they go to East Cary, it's probably not going to be fine. It maybe, it's probably what we will end up doing. Is this what we want for Morrisville? Is this what we are going to have having providing our kids? Am I going to be satisfied with my life here? Probably not. But you know what? We can make a change. You guys have the power.

We have elected you. I think you can make a change. Take some risks. Provide a better life for us. And today, Morrisville has come out and they have spoken. We need schools. First and foremost, our needs are schools. Thank you for the time, for helping me voice my needs, hopefully it will make a difference. Tell us what you need from us. We will do what we can, but I need, we need for you to also do the same. Thank you. (*Prathyusha Dukkupati, 1118 Oatney Ridge Lane*)

- o. Thank you. My name is *Patty Cheng*, and I reside at *304 Millet Drive* in the Carpenter Park single-family neighborhood along Morrisville-Carpenter Road, as one of eight neighborhoods around Morrisville Carpenter Road. And, I'm sorry but I must have missed the blue memo for tonight. Ok. Some of you have seen me ride my red, hybrid, un-motorized two-wheel bicycle down Morrisville Carpenter Road to events at Town Hall Drive. I think Council Member Johnson or Steve Rao could attest to that. I try to be active as I get older. And, tonight in item number 10.b, you will be voting to complete the Crabtree Creek Greenway Extension to Morrisville Carpenter Road, so I commend you for reaching this milestone that was established just over nine years ago in Town Council Chambers. We have former Council Member Pete Martin who was part of that vote here, along with Mark Stohlman, Tom Murray, who went on to the General Assembly, and Linda Lyons who I ran into lifting weights at the Morrisville Aquatics and Fitness Center this past week. She remembers quite vividly the reason that she voted against making the road going through the floodplain instead of providing for the greenway, was that the road, the land was too wet for a regular road. That road has to be a bridge on stilts going over the floodplain, very expensive, connecting one Town road, to another Town road. So I don't expect we will be getting any money from the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization for this project. And as you vote for providing funds to accommodate the final phase of this greenway that was decided upon over nine years ago by our Town Council members, I challenge you to use funds that were appropriated well, that you have been entrusted to spend on behalf of taxpayers in Morrisville wisely and do not allow for callous disregard whether in five or ten years. We're gonna be, you're gonna allow for the option of building a road over this greenway. That's ridiculous if you're going to vote for this greenway completion today and still allow for this Crabtree Crossing Extension bridge road over natural floodplain to be in our long-term transportation plan. The public comments that are available online shows that of 556 comments that have been registered, six of them are from me perhaps but, let's say there were 540 people who commented, there were about 450 people approximately who commented specific to this particular project. 98% of those people asked that you not change the decision made nine years ago. Thank you very much.
- p. The first big new thing is that I do not live in Kitts Creek. I live in Ridgemont in Morrisville. My name is *Melissa* and I'm from *107 Gratiot Drive*. I will try not to echo too much of what has already been said today. We need more schools. We need more schools. We need more schools. My husband happens to be an elementary school teacher at Morrisville Elementary. So, not only do I have kindergartener currently in Morrisville, but that is my husband's profession. We don't want to look elsewhere for multiple reasons, because of that. But the traffic surrounding our community, which I first bought here in 2007 and it was not like this. We've seen tremendous growth in Morrisville and we love that. But we have not improved what you need to live comfortably and remain happy as a family, as a growing family. We want to see those things and school is so important. For some round, approximate numbers, Cedar Fork has approximately 130 to 160 rising fifth graders that will need to go to middle school. Morrisville elementary has between 120 and 150. Carpenter is about the same. That's a lot of kids rising to sixth grade that need to go to middle school that we are shipping out of our town. That's too much. It's not right. Everyone knows it's not right. And that's pretty much all I have to say. (*Melissa Ross*)
- q. Dear council members, thanks for listening to us. My name is (inaudible). I also want to point out that I don't live in Kitts Creek but I wanted to make sure that it's not just the Kitts Creek

community that is here. This actually is the whole Morrisville come here to express, express our concern about schools. I live in Providence Place, 1977 Grace Point Road, and what I wanted to point out is when I moved to this area, I thought it had great schools. So, I, I could have lived in Durham which was much cheaper but I wanted to move to Morrisville because it has better schools and better community obviously. But I was really surprised to find that there are no middle school or high schools in this area, and that, the house I moved into, the person who lived there moved out of this area because he wanted to be closer to West Cary where his daughters are going. My daughter is a rising fifth grader, and right now I'm thinking what do I do? Do I spend time, do I let my daughter spend time on the bus, or do I move closer to the school? That, and I'm sure, [is] on the mind of every parent who has a rising fourth, rising fifth grader, or you know, rising high schooler, or whatever. But, so, I personally think if we let this happen, continue to happen, pretty soon this community will not be a community anymore. Lot of people will move out of this place and will not be actually making, will not have a good community of people. So I want to really consider that and think of the future of this place so that we continue to have, you know, good real estate and good people and good community.

- r. My name is *Shrigant Gandaroo*, and I stay in Kitts Creek on 1144 (*inaudible*). I just wanted to let you know a day in my home, the importance we give for our education. My wife, she wakes up at like 4:00 in the morning and she cooks food, get everything ready, and then she travels to Chapel Hill, and then comes back at 3:00 to pick our daughter, son and daughter from Cedar Fork. And then I go late and then I drop them in the morning, and then come back late in the evening. The whole reason we struggle from the morning 4:00, to the evening 5:00 is because our kids, they are going to Cedar Fork School. And we don't want to keep them in like after school or before school and base their lives and make this playing around or go that around, not in the community itself. And we struggle. The whole point for this is the proximity of the schools. If the school is nearby, then I think like I'm going to stay here for a long time, but if I have like spend, half an hour, 45 minutes, most of them said like half an hour on the bus, but that's not just only the half an hour. You take like five, ten minutes before to reach the bus stop, and then, another ten minutes. If you have like a school nearby, maybe people would do carpool and then like drop off their kids at much better time. And then like them, making them sit in, sitting in the bus for like half an hour, 40 minutes. Even if they're in same school. Even if they're like nearby also. It's like not just like we'll leave, like oh yeah, I have a school in my town nearby and I just use my bus services. It's not just only that point of it, you have people like go around, like talk to people, meet them, then drop off their kids and then get them sooner. Because even if, because my kid, initially when we were in Waterford community just a couple of miles from here and then suddenly one day when we bought a new home in Kitts Creek community which is like only another two miles from here. I was told that like, no, you are not eligible to go to Cedar Fork because it's a different (*inaudible*) now you have to go to somewhere else. I was a little bit puzzled. Like how come, how can I have a school just two, two miles from my home, by my property, now like, I'm travel five miles, which is like far away. So, like all these things are, will make up a decision to stay in a community. If tomorrow, like my kid, he's already in second grade, and my face, my wife is already bothering me, saying that, look at, if they're going to middle school, and we don't have nearby, then, maybe we have to like, move from here more nearby, because the only thing which made her take a job in Chapel Hill is that because that's the office where they allowed her to like work from six to three. She left her job in fidelity, which is like one mile from our home. The reason? Because they did not allow this. They did not allow my wife to like, ok come early or leave early. She took a job just to strain herself from here to like, Chapel Hill. Because of kids. Because of education. So it's all about education, kids and future. And I think most of you know from coming from different parts of the country, how important education is. If there is not a proper educator, then I think we are seeing the consequences in many. So I hope you make some decisions. Thank you.
- s. I probably won't take the full three minutes. I just thought I'd take few minutes and make you aware of some of the things that are being said about Morrisville and I think that impacts me

very emotionally. I moved to Morrisville, in fact some of my friends and I bought houses on the same street so that we could have kids going to school together. And whether you believe it or not, social media is a very critical platform in how a branding of an organization or even a government, governing body is perceived. I get on some of these mom's Facebook groups, and if there's somebody that's trying to move to Morrisville, I think, more often than not, everybody chimes on that thread and says don't think about moving to Morrisville. The schools, there aren't schools there. You know what? You're gonna move there now and in a couple of years, you're gonna move out. I think it's become a branding issue for us. If we don't take this seriously with a sense of urgency, I think we're going to bear the consequences of that over the next five or ten years. As part of my non-profit work, I've had an opportunity to work with the Morrisville Chamber of Commerce and if you ask the folks that are on the panel there, or even any of the organizations that are in RTP area, I think the number one thing organizations would tell you is how do we develop talent and retain them in this area and this is where we start. Right? We start by keeping our folks happy. We start by building schools. We start by creating a community where people can live and see themselves growing into for a long, long time. And also as some of my non-profit work, I work with some of the youngest entrepreneurs in the state. Whether you know it or not, a lot of them reside here in Morrisville. I have a whole list. I think Steve knows that first hand who they are. And their families are thinking, well some of their families are thinking to move out of Morrisville because of the lack of education systems here beyond elementary. So I'm just letting you know that these things are happening, you know they're not one offs. These are actual patterns. We don't want to be in a reactive mode five years from now and scrambling towards building a school. And I think, we don't just need an average school. We need some of the best schools the country has and we have an opportunity to set an example for what an excellent school system looks like. And I think we can make magic happen if we really put our hearts into it. And like some of the parents, and like some of the folks out here have said, let us know what you need from us. Like, how many signatures you need. I think none of us would stop from going door to door and getting what you need in terms of going to whether it's the Wake County Public School System or some other official that needs to sign a piece of document to move the agenda. So we, we'll do it. Just let us know, ok. My name is *Rupal Nishar*, and I live at *1348 Legendary Lane* in Morrisville.

- t. Hi, my name's *James Shepard*. I live at *1020 Topland Court*. I do live in Kitts Creek. So along with most of the people here, I think you've heard a lot of the passion and the data that a lot of the people have brought up, that says that, you know, we need schools, right? I've watched a number of my friends move away since we've been here. I spent over half my life in the military and this is the first place that I've called home since I left my parents, alright. So we need your help. And, I'm just, I'm gonna be really quick. You don't have to worry about the timer. So I'm just gonna tell you a little story that I learned while I was in Afghanistan. There's these three brothers, sitting on a mountain. And every day, they watch the Russians come by with tanks. And so one day they decided they were going to fight back and they picked up rocks and sticks, and rolled rocks in front of the tanks and put sticks on top of them and burned them. And that's how they beat the Russians. So what I'm asking and you what everybody else is asking you, is don't worry about the tank that's in front of you. Pick up a rock and stick and help us, ok.
- u. Hello. My name is *Avanthi Rachamalla*. I live at *6436 Kit Creek Road*. I'm a very nervous public speaker so please bear with me if I fumble. So we live in Morrisville, in Lochmere for five years before we moved to Kitts Creek. This was back in, I guess 2014 and we decided to move to Kitts Creek because we were looking for a great neighborhood that has a good community, there's lot of activities for the children and Kitts Creek offers every single thing we had on our list for our daughter who was three years old when we moved. And we were also looking for schools at the same time because we didn't want her to go to a school that didn't have a, I don't know, a good support system. I don't know, maybe that's a nicer word to say it right now. But, and when we were shopping for houses, we were told Morrisville would have access to all the schools for West Cary, but we all know how many houses have been built, how the population

grew in the past couple of years and Kitts Creek kept getting shuffled out of West Cary more and more. And we have to like consider sending our daughter back to East Cary for middle school in a few years. The whole reason we moved out of East Cary, we had to send her back to East Cary for middle school which is very, very upsetting for us. And I didn't really do a lot of research as most of the people here who spoke before me did, but this is what I have found out this morning. Very short research again. Apex actually has five middle schools, of which four of them are year-round and only one of them is traditional. Cary also has five schools, middle schools, but only four of them are traditional. One of them is year-round. I don't really understand why the imbalance is between Apex and Cary. I mean I'm not even going to get into the fact that Morrisville doesn't have a middle school. And the new middle school alternates that's gonna come up, that's again (inaudible), West Cary is fighting for them to be traditional and if you could consider making that year-round, I guess it could house more students. I mean, that's the, probably, I don't know like, it could give our kids a better chance of getting into Alston Ridge, rather than having to shuttle them for half an hour, every day, morning and evening, to get to middle school. It's ridiculous. It's really, I didn't, I mean, if you really, if y'all had kids, don't you really consider the fact that I'm sure most people did. I mean, West Cary has kids. We have kids. I mean, why aren't we the same? And why it's being prejudiced over us? Preston is only five miles away from East Cary. We are ten miles away from East Cary middle school but we get to go to East Cary so why isn't Preston getting a chance to go to East Cary so we can go to middle school here? Same distance. Five miles, five miles. Isn't that fair? I don't know. You guys make the call. Thank you.

- v. My name is *Soumajit Ghosh*. I live on *701 Willingham Road*. I've lived in Morrisville, maybe 16 or 17 years in Breckenridge. And we are proudly one of the first few neighborhoods along with the neighborhoods in Town Hall Commons. And I have seen being shifted from Cedar Forks to Green Hope to Mills Park for the middle school, then to East Cary and West Cary. High school is only one choice, so we need your help so that our kids get a place. A safe place. A closer commute. So that we can have the community feel. And I can say that from my experience, a lot of my friends, and some of my close friends rather, they have moved away just to be close. And now, I feel the brunt for almost 16 or 17 years. I want to stay here another 17 years, so help me God. Thank you.
- w. Hi I'm (inaudible), *1809 Lee Valley Lane*. I'm also Kitts Creek resident. I really wasn't gonna speak much on this because I was, I've been so passionate and I think I'll break down. I'm so angry when it comes to this issue. We've been in Kitts Creek and Morrisville for 10 years. And we have seriously started considering moving out of the community because of the school situation. And it makes me very unhappy because we love the neighborhood we live in. We love the community we live in. We love the friends my children have made. And it makes me very angry that we are having to consider moving just because of the school situation. My son will be starting middle school and we were lucky to get into magnet, a magnet program, which will hopefully let us live in the community. But that said, I'm still unhappy that he won't be able to go to school with his close friends. He's gonna miss them because not everybody's gonna get into a magnet program. And he will definitely not have kids in his street playing with him, or you know, he'll have to take the long bus ride, which definitely upsets us. That said, I know everybody says, act now, act now before it's too late. I'm telling you, it's already too late. And you know, don't, it is too late. We need to do something right away. This is, this is a matter that have, that we've let it go by far too long and I think we really need to come together to make this work out, some way. You know, we need a middle school to begin with, plus a high would be wonderful and we need to start thinking outside the box to get this done. Thank you.
- x. Town Manager Martha Paige: Thank you Mayor. I think I'd like to address my first comment to the group that's here and say thank you to you. We do appreciate hearing from our residents all the time and we recognize this is an important topic. And I'm taking some liberties of speaking on behalf of staff and council, just to give some context, some of which I'm going to

say you've talked about a little bit before. I've been with the Town for four and a half years and so this is from my personal experience. And since I've been here, I want you to know the Town Council, individually and collectively, has worked with school board members to advocate on behalf of the Town regarding school issues. In addition, Town staff does that on a regular basis as well. Not only with issues like this, but operational needs, and we provide information on site selection situations, and processes and other issues at any time we can assist them or they can call us for information. We are committed to these efforts and they will continue, for all of the residents of Morrisville. A couple of examples I just want to share with you is, is that we, back when I first came, we (the Town of Morrisville) were one of the first people they (WCPSS) came and talked to about those future bond referendums to build the schools for, for the advocacy when you went to the polls for that. So our Town Council was involved in that. We had the Town staff, or the Wake County Public School staff, into our meeting in March of 2015, to talk to our Town Council about how the site selection process works so we would be informed and could continue to be engaged in that process. Town Council passed a resolution in support of the placement of schools, specifically middle and high schools in Morrisville, just a year ago. We've sent that multiple times to them to remind them of that interest. We facilitated information in October of this year throughout the community when people were concerned about some of the school assignment discussions that were occurring. And as you may know, Parkside Elementary, which is in RTP, is going in right behind our Breckenridge community, and we're working with them ongoing to make sure that the development of that school site meets the needs that have been expressed by citizens and Town Council members. We do recognize that the availability of land in Morrisville is limited. We, as I mentioned, we are regular contact with them as they look for potential future school sites. We work to influence it, and as you've mentioned, this is not within the legal purview of Morrisville, so our power is in our advocacy. Site selection is also about more than just acreage. There are many factors that Wake County Public Schools use to influence the size and the location of any site needed for a school. You've also mentioned it's a county-wide process, and has not been city-specific. Land being available does not guarantee the placement of a school. But those conversations are going on, often not in the public purview, but because they desire to maintain the confidentiality of those discussions in order to save their negotiation power should they need to purchase land with property owners.

What is Town Council and Town staff doing on your behalf? We continue to advocate. We listen to you. We care about what you say. We talk. We make calls. I know each of my council members every time they see a school board member, they talk to those school board members. Just on Monday, there was a proposal at the Wake County Public School System Facilities Committee meeting to form a special committee with specific towns, Morrisville being one of them, to recognize that there are individual and different needs here and to form committees of both elected officials and staff that will allow us to talk about our perspective and the specific needs of Morrisville in a productive way, to inform their opinions and their discussions about what needs to happen. In addition, our own Town Council, at its recent retreat, has asked staff to prepare a detailed land use analysis at the McCrimmon Extension Parkway, excuse me, McCrimmon Parkway Extension area, to evaluate the appropriate uses of that area. It is currently in the Airport Overlay, but a determination of the viability of that area is something they've asked us to look at and whether Wake County Public School System would consider that or not, it's not known, but at least we would have up to date information for them to consider. The legal ability for the Town to purchase land for a school is limited. But, council has asked our Town Attorney to look at and evaluate that option. We continue to look for and explore ways to communicate the opportunities for sites that we become aware of to Wake County Public Schools, when that's possible. We also plan to continue to talk to our peer communities to see what we can take from their best practices to advocate on behalf of our town. We recognize, and I think the school system recognizes, that there may be a need to look at more creative ways to establish schools. Some non-traditional sites, some different purposes, that perhaps the amount of land they need to build a school may become a viable option. The Town is committed

to facilitating better communication with you and access to information that we share with them and that they share with us. And we, I've spoken with our Public Information Officer and we're going to develop a link from our website to put all the documents and the information that we have about schools on there for you to look at and see. And we pledge to have that ready for you to look at by April 1st. And we'll continue to look for better ways to communicate our role and our efforts to promote schools and our neighborhood as, as we identify them and we hope that you will share things that work for you as well. I think one of the most important things that I've recognized from tonight and that we will do is, we will transcribe your comments. It's an unusual step, but we will transcribe your comments to share not only with your council members but with the school board officials. Schools for our children is a shared challenge and we pledge to work with you and Wake County Public School System to talk productively and work towards addressing your concerns. Thank you very much.

DRAFT