

Summary of Community Input Meeting

October 17, 2006 – 6:30PM

Jupiter High School

Proposed Changes – Jupiter High School to WT Dwyer High School

ABC Members: Cinthia Becton, Rose Ann Brown, Virginia Farace, Al Williams, Carmen Campbell, Lauran Hausdorff, Dana McDavid

Staff: Art Wittman, Mark Murray, and Lisa Dwyer

Mr. Wittman opened the meeting at 6:35 p.m. He introduced the ABC members and explained the purpose of the meeting. He outlined the remaining boundary process. He indicated that the ABC would review the comments at their October 19th meeting, which is open to the public. There were speakers and written comments to the committee.

Speakers:

1. Lee Frankhouser – SAC 028. He has issue regarding audit/validation of addresses for present students attending Jupiter High School. There is no ongoing validation in place. He heard from two school administrators that there was massive abuse of residency. He has a student in high school and middle school. He assumed his children would go to Jupiter HS, which is A rated.
2. Vice Mayor Kuretski, Representing the Town of Jupiter (see attached letter)
3. L Hodowal – SAC 028. What effect will moving students from an A rated school to a C rated school have on our property values? WT Dwyer has an athletic focus; Jupiter an academic focus. Many homes are for sale; buyers will walk away if the high school (for the homes) does not have good rating. He asked if staff had an estimate of the loss in property value if change goes through. The district should have an estimate.
4. Tim Lynch – SAC 031. He has a daughter in 10th grade in JHS. She involved at the school on the Volleyball team. The have and have not thinking is affecting students in the boundary change areas. If his daughter was moved to Dwyer when she was going into 9th grade, he may not be here. He feels Dr. Johnson is committed to the change. Asked the ABC members to give careful consideration and please let 10th grade students and sibling's stay at JHS. He read writing about self-esteem.
5. Kim Acuna – SAC 028. She hoes the ABC listens to the comments. The change is personal for her. She has two children in public school. They moved here from North Florida, St John's County that has an excellent school system. She researched the schools here. She has a 9th grader and a son in middle school. This is an arbitrary boundary change. She will not put here kids in a school that is not up to par. She cannot afford to move but may have to.
6. Joe Edgley – SAC 031. Against change. Enrollment is down in the district. Why is the move being made now? It may be premature. There are not many students in the Bluffs, more elderly. He has two children at JHS. Both are in activities. It is detrimental to move them. They bought in the Bluffs in 1990 to go to JHS. His kids want to continue there. WT Dwyer is a C school. The FCAT is not getting easier. Wayne Gent an administrator was brought in as principal to take over. He finds this strange.

7. Laurie Abrahamsen - SAC 031. Proper notification should have been done. Families with students in lower grades not notified. If JHS cannot accommodate students who live in the Town, why are others bussed in? They were bused to North Palm Beach ES and then Beacon Cove ES. Independence MS is the only school that her kids went all the way through (6-8).
8. Chris Radentz – SAC 036. If a student already attends JHS they should be allowed to finish at Jupiter. Her son will be a junior and Dwyer has been his “rival”. This will be a difficult thing for these kids to overcome. Is Jupiter overcrowded because of magnet program enrollment? She has friends that live in the Dwyer district and chose a magnet so they could attend Jupiter. Her son will have to go to Dwyer and they get to stay at Jupiter. Move magnet to Dwyer.
9. Scott Mayer – SAC 031. Of the eight rules used to make School Board student assignments, most favor the Bluffs remaining at Jupiter HS.
10. Chris F. Johnson – SAC 031. Is Ms. Brennan still on staff? (Art Wittman informed him that she is not). Planning of portables on brand new school? He is resident of the Town of Jupiter. Where does our district 1 (School Board) representative stand? He has a small child in day care, twins in elementary, a kid in high school and one in college. Son came home and his day care teacher is leaving. There were news stories of 12 portables at JHS. Families look at schools when they locate. He lives in the NE corner of the JHS boundary. Property values will change because Dwyer is a C school. He called demographics and was told a mailer to all families is too expensive. But his kids bring home 6-8 pieces of paper a day. His 10th grade student’s self-esteem will suffer. He has not heard a good reason for the change. The map shows that he is close to JHS. JHS is part of the Town of Jupiter; he thought they would always get to go to JHS. There may be another move year.
11. Ana Nuchovich – SAC 031. Moved here in 1989. Schools were important. Her son is in 10th grade at JHS. The Bluffs is the only area of Jupiter that was sent to North Palm Beach ES. And then Duncan MS. Neither is in Jupiter. Bluffs went to JHS. Now another change is proposed. Not fair to move kids in school and sports. No one planned well. Do not keep moving them. Year school was built it was full. Consider the original neighborhoods.
12. Elisa Madden – SAC 036. School district created the over crowding by changing the boundaries adding Jupiter Farms kids who used to go to Dwyer. Now Dwyer is not at full capacity and JHS is over crowded. Son had to go to North Palm Beach ES. Had to ride bus out of Jupiter. She wrote to Nat Harrington. She was denied reassignment. She had to drive son to school. Her son is in 11th grade at JHS. Yes he can stay and finish, but she will have to drive him.

13. Peter Van Kirk. – SAC 031. His wife and two his two children live in the Bluffs. They purposely bought there for the school district. He strongly objects to the Jup-1 study and questions the JHS-1 boundary. He moved to bluffs in 1980 and bought there for the “A” rated schools. His family has been here since 1954. He looked in Jupiter Farms but decided to locate in the Bluffs. Four years ago, Jupiter Farms was moved into JHS. This is the reason for overcrowding. Families in JF have reduced taxes and the advantage of no Town taxes. Parents are using false addresses. This is a common occurrence. The change is ill conceived. The Vice Mayor mentioned 6000 new homes and Study JHS-1 four years ago. He did research on web about property values. There is an average 9.9% decline. His sister is a teacher at high school. The FCAT is being tightened. Her high school went form a B to a C. following this logic Dwyer will go from a C to a D. he is asking for another meeting with proper notification of all parents.
14. Davis Piccolo – SAC 031. He opposes the change for students currently attending JHS. They should be allowed to stay. His son lives in the Bluffs. He is in 9th grade at JHS. Son was chosen to attend the magnet at Dwyer HS. Son decided to attend the high school in his hometown. He made the choice and ants to stay at JHS.
15. Barbara Richardson – SAC 031. Bluffs community has been in Jupiter for 20 years. Why do they have to be rezoned for the third time? Why would Palm wood in Palm Beach Gardens never be rezoned? How long would the bus ride be? This change will be hard for families with kids at different schools.
16. Janet Ramirez – SAC 028. School district is C school. They specifically moved to Abacoa area to send their children to these schools. She has a sophomore who will be a junior next year. This is hardly a time for college bound students to make a change in environment or try to adjust to a new school. The academic pressures are immense. She questioned the criteria for proof of residency. How often is this monitored? What is the policy? She had an issue with magnet programs.
17. Mary Kosier – SAC 031. She opposes the proposed changes to the school boundary for the Bluffs community. The kids in the Bluffs should remain at Jupiter HS. She supports the Town’s assessment of growth. She would like an investigation into false addresses and then have the district get back with the community. Her area is built out and the numbers will not change. Dr. Benaim is a Jupiter Farms resident. She hopes the change is not viewed as Jupiter Farms against the Bluffs.
18. Lisa Rhodes – SAC031. She lives in the Bluffs for the schools. They pay town taxes. She is glad to hear that the town opposes the changes. There are plenty of other areas closer to Dwyer. They will apply for a magnet or go to private school. Property Values will go down.

19. Jerry Montgomery – SAC 028. 90% of Abacoa is in Jupiter. He moved to Tuscany just for the schools. Property values will be killed. He has been in Real Estate for 20 years. He is active in the tri-county area the last three years. He talked to banks. The value of a home in a C rated school district is \$50,000 less. This is on top of non-existent real estate activity now. The market further reduces property values. He moved from Virginia. His kids liked Abacoa. They bought there for the A rated schools. This 9th grade daughter plays soccer. He also has a senior at JHS and a middle school child. The change for his daughter is traumatic. He does not know how lines are drawn, but someone should like of the kids. His sixth grader has an ailment. When he heard about the proposed change he was upset. He requests that if change is made, that just new people move. Not people with kids currently in school.
20. Vicky Tays. She does not live in an area that is proposed for change. Jupiter High School is a nightmare. It is incredibly over capacity. Big issue. Take into account potential growth. Change should not be a band-aid. Whole problem should be fixed. Try to keep people in Jupiter at a town school. Even distribution of students is needed.
21. Donna Rothenberg – SAC 028. She moved here two years ago when there was a housing crunch. They rented for one year wanting to get Jupiter HS because it is A-rated. This type of change is premature. Dwyer should be fixed for a better rating first, whatever it takes. If Dwyer is an A school, people will move.
22. Ella Crescenzi – SAC028. There are so many students at JHS that do not belong there. People can hire someone to call their children gifted. Her son left Independence Middle School and donated 30 hours of community service. He had grades to go into best magnet program. Now he will not have a choice because he will be an 11th grade student next year. She cannot ask for a reassignment form because her son is not a minority. There are not many older students within Martinique.
23. Cheryl Giantsios – SAC 031. How was rezoning decided? Why should her children “trade down” from an “A” school to a “C” school? They moved from Broward County. Her daughter is in 10th grade. They moved to an “A” school (JHS). They promised daughter that they would not move again. Now boundary is changing. Her eighth grade student will also have to move. Can existing kids be grandfathered in? She moved to the Seaside, not the “C” side.
24. Randy Fridkis – SAC 028. He has a 10th grade student and a middle school student. Value issue does not matter. Change is about kids and choices. His child had a rough 9th grade year. He commented on a point made by another speaker about the Dwyer and Jupiter High School being adversial. The change would mean throwing the JHS kids to the Dwyer wolves. Kids will become second rate. This will be detrimental. They moved here 11 years ago because kids were not yet entrenched in middle and high school. Change is not fair. Stressing Dwyer with more students will overcrowd the school. Fix Dwyer first before any change. There is a common thread tonight that kids in JHS do not belong there or those kids in the magnet programs are overcrowding the school. People manipulate the system. He will volunteer to investigate. He wants to know where he can find data that the school board is investigating and making a 100% effort.

25. Mark Deluccia – SAC 031. He is president of Homeowner Association in the Bluffs. He does not have kids. He does not care about the value of his home because he is not moving. He has seen the results of redistricting. They moved and scrimped to get in the right schools. ABC put it on a personal level. Parents are making sacrifices. Do not forget the young parents. The Bluffs is 21 years old and people are moving. Young families are moving in. This is great to see. Moving Kids from an “A” to a “C” school in New York has not lifted the receiving schools. The change is disruptive. People will need to move.
26. Donna Ramirez – SAC 028. This is unfair to students who are already attending JHS and are in the process of forming great academies in order to be accepted to a good college. She tanks the parents for coming. She is a senior at JHS. Her family moved from NY to JHS when she was in 10th grade. Change for kids in middle of high school has bad effects. Her 15 year old, 10th grade brother will have to move. Please consider that they are people.
27. Debbie Wiley – SAC 027. Why not accelerate building of Riviera Beach Hs to relieve overcrowding and emphasize local schools? She thanked Vice-Mayor Kuretski. She has lived here since 1979, a native. They went to Palm Beach Gardens HS when it was the best school. Magnet programs are disappointing. Local kids should go to local schools. Riviera Beach Hs will relive 3 or 4 schools.
28. Susan Feldman – SAC 028. Against reassignment. Given the concerns over Dwyer HS, what is being done to improve that school and discipline issues? Why is Valencia not included in this (change)? She moved to Abacoa. She has been a teacher for 32 years. She heard Dwyer was a good school and put her daughter there. There were fights after school. Her kids are adopted. She found out her daughter could go to Suncoast *had been in program elsewhere). He son is in Independence MS, but was zoned for Dwyer so they moved to Martinique. Now she is in the same situation as before. Her son took the Suncoast route but her goal is a neighborhood school He can bike to Jupiter HS. Dwyer has such diversity. She teaches at Lake Park where everyone is pulling for an “A”. What is going on at Dwyer? Police were there recently at a football game against Suncoast.

Written comments:

1. Kim Lizzin: Does not want her son to have to switch schools when he only has two (2) years of school left.
2. Linda Steel: Lives in Martinique and is against the rezoning.
3. Asa Durocher: Lives in Martinique and is against rezoning.
4. Richard Howe: Against any change that will affect Jupiter Farms students. Has a son in 10th grade at Jupiter High School, and is a member of the marching band, and in his second year with the engineering academy.
5. Anna Haylund: If you have a child who will be a senior, can your other child who will be a sophomore so that we will not have children in two different schools?
6. Robin Stetler: As a realtor she sees families leaving Palm Beach County because they cannot afford taxes and insurance.
7. Maureen Busscher: Objects to rezoning. Bought their home in the Bluffs expecting that their sons would attend Jupiter High School.
8. Susan Padilla: All the parents will apply for the Jupiter High School Magnet Program so the overcrowding issue will not be resolved.
9. David Garfield: Opposed to rezoning. Daughter had the choice to attend Dreyfoos, Suncoast, or Jupiter High School. She chose Jupiter High School. Daughter very upset at leaving Jupiter High School.
10. Ellen Garfield: The Bluff's has existed in the Town of Jupiter for 20 years. Bought their house 17 years ago with intention of their children would attend Jupiter High School. They feel the overcrowding is due to Jupiter High School having a magnet program and students from unincorporated areas. Opposed to the rezoning.
11. Denise Paolucci: Has lived in the Bluff's for 20 years because the high school was Jupiter. The Bluff's should not be affected because of new developments. Wants to see the Bluff's remain at Jupiter High School.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:40PM.