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June 5, 2012

Victor M. Mendez, Administrator  
Federal Highway Administration  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20590

Commissioner Greg A. Whirley, Sr.  
Virginia Department of Transportation  
1401 East Broad Street  
Richmond, VA 23219

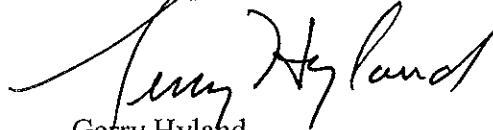
Dear Administrator Mendez and Commissioner Whirley:

First, I would like to thank you for the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) diligent efforts to improve Richmond Highway from Telegraph Road to Mount Vernon Memorial Highway. This widening will help ease the daily traffic backups near Fort Belvoir and will permit Department of Defense and their support employees to get to and from work quickly and safely while providing much needed right of way for the planned expansion of Metro down Richmond Highway, which will one day connect Fort Belvoir to the rest of the metropolitan region by rail. FHWA's partnership with the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and Fairfax County Department of Transportation (FCDOT) has been a beneficial collaboration that has to date been very responsive to the needs of constituents along the project boundaries, notably the Lyndam Hill and Inlet Cove communities.

FHWA, VDOT and FCDOT staff have proposed two options for widening Richmond Highway at Woodlawn Plantation owned and managed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation in the Woodlawn Historic District. The first option, and staff's stated preference, would shift the roadway alignment to the south of the Woodlawn Baptist Church and through the Woodlawn Stables to avoid the church's cemetery. This "Southern Bypass" would potentially eliminate the equestrian facility, which has been in place for sixty-one years and require the relocation of the historic Otis Mason House. Woodlawn Stables is a treasured community recreational resource that generations of Mount residents have enjoyed and wish to preserve. Alternatively, the second proposal to "Widen-In-Place" would widen Richmond Highway in its current location and move the roadway closer to Woodlawn Plantation and may require the relocation of the Grandview House and would require the relocation of graves at the Church. Both the Southern Bypass and the Widen-In-Place options require the relocation of historic resources and expansion onto National Trust for Historic Preservation land.

I have examined the proposed alignments closely and considered the viewpoints of all organizations and constituents surrounding the project. It is my opinion that widening Richmond Highway in its current alignment, the Widen-In-Place option, is the least damaging choice that will preserve the historic character of Woodlawn Plantation and protect the community asset of Woodlawn Stables. Staff must continue to work with all stakeholders to minimize and mitigate the impacts of this necessary roadway improvement. We must strive to strike a delicate balance between investing in improvements for residents who use Richmond Highway and to preserve and protect our historic resources for future generations to learn and enjoy.

Yours in public service,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gerry Hyland". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the beginning.

Gerry Hyland  
Mount Vernon District Supervisor  
Fairfax County Board of Supervisors