

Resolution of Non-Support of Ordinance 21-O-0367

Whereas, the City of Atlanta (City) has an obligation to all citizens and communities to engage in open, transparent, and fair execution of its policymaking duties;

Furthermore, the City has an obligation to ensure that vulnerable communities do not continue to bear the brunt of environmentally degrading policy and policy outcomes;

Whereas, in furtherance of the obligation the City must consider all viable alternatives when making a decision and taking action that assigns an additional environmental burden to an already environmentally burdened community;

Whereas, the City Council erred when establishing the Community Stakeholder Advisory Council (CSAC), a public entity, without accountability to the City Council

Whereas the Atlanta Police Foundation, a private entity, is allowed to run its own concealed planning process while leveraging public funding and authority;

Whereas, the justification for urgency is based on an upsurge in violence correlated with an epidemic that is receding, and upon a false narrative that lack of training is a primary driver of poor public safety retention;

Whereas, the original private analysis is still not publicly available, has not had third party analysis, and obligates the City of Atlanta to undisclosed expenses and encumbrances;

Whereas, police and fire academies would be best hosted on existing academic campuses embedded in the communities they serve;

Whereas, the CSAC has been embroiled in ongoing confusion about its-own authority, role, and transparency resulting in tensions among members who support or oppose the facility, as proposed;

Whereas, inherent conflicts and confusion about the purpose, function, and objectives of the CSAC, a public body, have resulted in subordination of the public's interest in favor of the private interest;

Whereas, conflicting language in the authorizing Ordinance (21-O-0367) and Ground Lease has resulted in obfuscation about the exact size of the training center's footprint;

Whereas, the original configuration, location of facilities, and/or training center's footprint, stated to be 85 acres, have been modified with unknown, undisclosed, and potentially serious adverse environmental, historical, cultural consequences;

Whereas, the Atlanta Prison Farm's history of use and activities, many of which likely resulted in environmental contamination that require environmental study and remediation;

Whereas, a Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment has been completed and required that a Phase 2 Environmental Site Assessment be performed;

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Whereas, the Limited Site Investigation performed does not meet the requirements of a Phase 2 Environmental Site Assessment;

Whereas, subsequent changes to the originally-proffered site plan have expanded into a large area that was not included in either environmental site investigation;

Whereas, the grossly secretive site-selection process imposed on the community is not in keeping with the City's own established transparency obligation overseen by the City's Office of Transparency;

Whereas, modular classrooms will deteriorate more rapidly than permanent, already-built classrooms, and paving large swaths of forest will simultaneously eliminate a carbon sink and require substantial embedded carbon for construction;

Whereas, the dysfunction of the CSAC process has devolved into actions designed to manipulate, control and/or deny members free-speech;

Whereas, restricting the free-speech of independently appointed members of a public body is likely a violation of the First Amendment of the United States Constitution, and not in the best interest of the City;

Whereas, the problems and consequences described above took place under a different Mayor and City Council;

Whereas, a new Mayor and City Council retain the prerogative to cancel the Atlanta Prison Farm Ground Lease;

We the undersigned members of the Atlanta City Council through this Resolution of Non-Support exercise its authority under the applicable Ordinance to cancel the Atlanta Prison Farm Ground Lease awarded to the APF;

Furthermore, in recognition of the need for new public safety training facilities, the undersigned urges the City Council to begin immediate action to investigate and evaluate the many alternative locations and partnerships that are capable of meeting the public safety training and readiness needs of the City.