

New Johns Island ES Questions/Comments AND Responses

April 18, 2023

The following document is a consolidation of recent questions and comments from the neighbors whose driveways are being extended to meet the new RAB at the main entrance to the future new elementary school. The questions were received on April 3, 2023 and responses provided on April 6, 2023 at a Q&A meeting. Another Q&A meeting was conducted on April 17, 2023 to follow up on questions from the April 6th meeting and allow an opportunity for those who could not attend the April 6th Q&A discussion. All other community member questions and responses are documented [here](#) from the previous community meetings held at Angel Oak ES, Mt. Zion ES, and St. John's HS. We will continue to accept public comments and review concerns. Please email us at Capital@charleston.k12.sc.us.

Summary of Community Questions

1. Buffer

What type of visual buffer will be between the traffic circle and residents? What would the buffer be constructed of? Would the buffer block headlights of all traffic leaving the new elementary school? Are there any considerations or modifications that would prevent cars from losing control on the traffic circle and damaging private property. Who will be responsible for the maintenance of the buffer between the new elementary school and the residents?

Response:

CCSD is proposing native landscape plantings to help screen and shield existing property from the new roundabout. The proposed landscape plantings will help to obscure headlights coming from cars traveling the proposed roundabout after dusk. Landscape plantings are to be located in the space between the new roundabout right-of-way and existing property lines or in the buffer area. The location and type of trees will be designed by the landscape architect and architect. A varied height selection of plantings will be used to increase the density of the proposed buffer plantings and address reducing visibility into neighbor property. Maintenance of the proposed buffer plantings will be coordinated with SCDOT and neighbors as the design progresses.

The new roundabout will be designed to meet all SCDOT traffic and safety standards.

2. Bus Parking Facility

Who will monitor the water quality in Penny Creek to ensure the drainage from the school parking and bus parking area does not negatively impact the water quality in the creek? Who currently monitors the flow of water through the drainage pipe that flows under the property located at 1237 River Road? Will such run-off water quality monitors be placed at the actual site of the County's easement on our properties?

How many light poles will be in the proposed bus parking area? What is the height of the light poles? What type of lights will be used? What are the hours that these lights will be kept on? What will be done to minimize the light pollution affecting our property?

Response:

There is no identified entity required to directly monitor water quality in Penny Creek. CCSD would be responsible for water quality on its site. The City of Charleston is responsible for reviewing the proposed site plans to ensure it meets state and local requirements for stormwater before leaving the school's site, which will be controlled and managed. Please be aware that stormwater that flows in the pipe under adjacent properties is not controlled or managed like the proposed school site will be. Currently, the pipe under the adjacent properties receives storm water flow from both River Road and its adjacent properties.

In response to the community, CCSD has proposed reducing the Bus Parking Facility from its original 68 buses down to approximately 35 buses. This redesign reduces the amount of impervious area which reduces the amount of stormwater. The new design also increases retention pond sizes which will allow for a slower release of stormwater. This revised plan will be submitted for review by the City of Charleston this month.

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As good stewards of the community, CCSD can advocate for DHEC to add a water monitoring station closer to Penny Creek. CCSD can also advocate for the County (or other government agency) to improve their maintenance program related to the pipes and ditches off property that are of concern.

The lighting plan for the Bus Parking Facility is still under review. CCSD anticipates a limited number of light poles with an approximate height of 25 feet. The current plan is to use LED lighting with internal and external glare shielding. This will prevent light spill from leaving the property. Lighting will be controlled by CCSD's energy management system. The lighting on/off times are adjusted as necessary to provide for the safest environment. Additionally, proposed landscape buffers and plantings that are intended to reduce visual, acoustic, and lighting effects off site. The north edge of the bus parking facility to the existing River Road is 350 feet and 475 feet to property lines on the north side of River Road. In addition, there is a seventy-five foot buffer on the south side of River Road that consists of existing trees.

3. Responsibility for Maintenance

Will CCSD, Charleston County, of the South Carolina Department of Transportation be responsible for the maintenance of the newly constructed driveways and buffer areas between homes and the traffic circle? The residents are requesting the responsible party to acknowledge the maintenance in writing.

Response:

If CCSD is responsible for the property, then CCSD will use identified resources to accomplish any regular or emergency maintenance on roads, driveways, and the buffer area.

4. Access

What will be the exact dimensions of the proposed new driveways/access points for each property to ensure that residents are still able to tow recreational vehicles on and off of their property? Who will have ownership of the proposed new driveway?

Response:

Please note the site plan is still being reviewed and improved. The dimensions for the proposed driveway extension will be provided once we have reviewed it with you. We have considered the turning radius for all recreational vehicles. The Civil Engineer has run an auto turn simulator to confirm that the proposed turning radii will accommodate towing recreational vehicles. The proposed extensions will be submitted for review and approval by the South Carolina Department of Transportation.

Ownership of the new proposed driveway extensions will be coordinated with SCDOT and affected property owners.

5. Services

How will trash and recycling services access residents' driveways? How will the post office deliver mail to current mailboxes located at residents' driveways?

Response:

CCSD intends to create a concrete pad adjacent to the relocated driveway to accommodate both trash and recycling collection. In addition, mailboxes will be relocated to the newly proposed driveway entrance. Mailboxes will be moved by a CCSD paid contractor.

6. Traffic Patterns

Will there be any barriers between the traffic roundabout and the properties currently situated on River Road so that if any cars veer off the roundabout, private properties and families will be protected from such run-away vehicles? Will speed limits be reduced?

Response:

The new roundabout will be designed to meet SCDOT traffic flow and safety requirements. In addition, the new proposed plantings along with existing trees will provide an additional natural barrier between the roundabout and private properties. If additional safety measures and/or traffic calming features are required by SCDOT, CCSD will comply and incorporate them into the design.

The speed limit on River Road is dictated by SCDOT. Speed transitions between the now posted 45 MPH on River Road and the new 25 MPH at the roundabout will meet SCDOT traffic and safety requirements. The reduced speed limit for the roundabout will slow traffic along River Road.

7. Property Access

Is there a proposed explanation as to how residents will be able to access their driveways during the construction of the proposed school project as well as the roundabout?

Response:

The location of the new proposed roundabout is located entirely on CCSD's property. This will allow construction of the roundabout to occur without affecting traffic along River Road.

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Where possible, the new driveway extensions will be constructed prior to the final rerouting of River Road. Where this is not possible, CCSD and the Construction Team will work with property owners to coordinate access to and from their property to the new River Road alignment.

Follow Up Questions from Community Meeting April 6, 2023

1. Will a registered sex offender be required to move with the construction of a new school in this area?

Response:

No, per state code SECTION 23-3-535 Section C, a registered sex offender who resides within one thousand feet of a new school to be built cannot be required to move.

2. Can the red oak tree that is currently located on the south side of River Road across from property TMS: 311-00-00-038 remain?

Response:

The red oak will need to be replaced due to the tree's proximity to the roundabout. The roots of the Red Oak will have to be cut and removed to facilitate the construction of the roadway. CCSD has obtained approval from the City of Charleston Board of Zoning Appeals on March 1, 2023 to remove this tree. Removed trees will be mitigated in accordance with the City of Charleston Zoning requirements.

3. If the area between the new proposed River Road right-of-way and the private properties are deeded over to the property owners, how much square footage will be added to the neighbors' properties?

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Response:

Due to the varying distance between the new proposed right-of-way and the existing private property owners, as well as, undefined new property lines, CCSD anticipates that the added square footage will vary between approximately 150sf to 14,500sf.

4. Will CCSD pay for legal fees associated with creating a shared use easement between properties TMS: 311-00-00-038 and TMS: 311-00-00-037 due to the necessity of these properties being required to share driveway access to the proposed realignment of River Road?

Response:

If the property between the new proposed River Road right-of-way and the existing property lines of the affected private property owners is deeded back to the private property owners, then CCSD will assume the costs for recording new plats for each property owner. In addition, CCSD will assume the costs for documenting and filing of a shared use easement between properties TMS: 311-00-00-038 and TMS: 311-00-00-037.

5. How long will the lights stay on at the Bus Parking Facility?

Response:

Lighting will be controlled by CCSD's energy management system. The lighting on/off times are adjusted as necessary to provide for the safest environment. In accordance with CCSD's exterior lighting procedures, LED lighting with internal and external glare shielding will be installed. This shielding will prevent light spill from leaving the property.

6. Will there be light pollution onto private properties directly across River Road from the Bus Parking Facility?

Response:

LED lighting with internal and external glare shielding will be installed. This shielding will prevent light spill from leaving the property. In addition, the north edge of the bus parking facility to the private properties on the north side of River Road is 475 feet to property lines. A portion of this 475 distance is a seventy-five foot buffer on the south side of River Road that consists of existing trees.

Follow Up Questions from Community Meeting April 17, 2023

7. How did non CCSD school families hear about the Community Meetings that took place at Angel Oak ES, Mt. Zion ES, and St. John's HS?

Response:

COMMUNITY MEETINGS September 14, 2021 at Mt. Zion ES AND September 16, 2021 at Angel Oak ES - The Office of Communications worked with the schools in Constituent District 9 to send out phone calls and emails to their school communities on September 10, 2021, and provided them with information to share on their [social media platforms](#) and websites (to include non CCSD families). The Office of Communications posted the flyers for the meetings on their Facebook on [September 10, 2021](#). The Office of Communications also posted a [video of the meeting on YouTube](#) a day after the meeting.

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COMMUNITY MEETING June 30, 2022 at St. John's HS - On June 23, 2022, the Office of Communications sent a call and email to families in Constituent District 9 about the community meeting and provided information for the schools in District 9 to send to their individual school communities (through social media, their websites, and newsletters), and the meeting notice was posted on the [district Facebook](#) page. A meeting notification was posted on the district's [Media Line](#) page on June 24, 2022 (for the week of June 27, 2022). On June 24, 2022, the Office of Communications sent a media advisory to local media partners [to help get the word out to the community](#) as well.

COMMUNITY MEETING November 3, 2022 - On October 27, 2022, the Office of Communications sent a call and text message to families in Constituent District 9 about the community meeting, provided information for the schools in District 9 to send to their individual school communities (through social media, their websites, and newsletters), and posted the meeting notice on the district Facebook page on [October 27, 2022](#). A meeting notification was posted on the district's [Media Line](#) page on October 28, 2022 (for the week of October 31, 2022). On October 31, 2022, the Office of Communications sent a media advisory to local media partners [to help get the word out to the community](#) as well.

8. How will the neighbors adjacent to the future main school entrance roundabout turn right from their driveways with a potential 30 foot trailer?

Response:

The civil engineer will study each driveway by using an auto turn software program to model the turning radius of towing a 30 foot trailer. Based on the results, the civil engineer will adjust the location of driveways and/or the radii of the driveway aprons.

9. How will the proposed buffer planting be affected by the existing ditch and buffer? Can the existing ditch be piped? How would a ditch be maintained if it is not piped?

Response:

The current proposed plan indicates piping the existing drainage ditch at the new proposed driveway extensions. The civil engineer will investigate piping the length of the ditch immediately adjacent to the new roundabout. This will need to be coordinated with local jurisdictions and utility companies. Proposed buffer plantings will be coordinated with SCDOT, the roundabout right-of-way, proposed new driveway extensions, utilities and stormwater piping and/or the existing drainage ditch. Maintenance of the existing drainage ditch is currently the responsibility of Charleston County. The project team will coordinate with them to ensure that the County will still have access to maintain the drainage ditch if it remains.