



The Falls Church Village Preservation and Improvement Society

March 11, 2022

Mayor Tarter and Members of the City Council
City of Falls Church
300 Park Avenue
Falls Church, VA 22046

Subject: City Clean-Up

Dear Mayor Tarter and Members of the City Council:

The Board of the Village Preservation and Improvement Society (VPIS) is concerned with a noticeable rise in litter on streets, sidewalk, parks and other open space, and in public and private parking lots in the City of Falls Church. The litter problem has been exacerbated in the past several years by COVID, with some litter being single-use items such as masks and carryout food containers. Turnover and net loss of City staff responsible for litter management may also contribute to this problem.

VPIS urges you to recognize that letting the litter problem get out of hand has a cost to the City in terms of public pride in the community and wider reputation. Allowing this problem to go unchecked can have economic consequences including negative impacts on property values and the desirability of the City as a place to shop, recreate, and do business.

The City should take several steps to reduce existing litter and minimize litter going forward including:

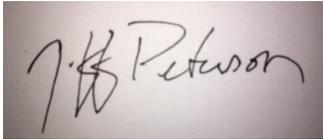
- adopt a resolution encouraging renewed community-wide efforts to reduce litter, including efforts by community organizations, businesses, schools and citizens, as well as support the City clean-up events in the Spring and Fall;
- commit to expanding the traditional Spring Clean-up event this year, including seeking engagement from community and school groups and the support of local businesses;
- expand promotion of the City [“Adopt-a-Spot”](#) program and encourage community organizations, schools, and businesses to participate (e.g., publish online a list of participating organizations and businesses and a map of places covered);

- improve transparency of litter control measures by public reporting online of calls to the existing City litter hotline, including reporting of follow-up actions;
- immediately expand manpower devoted to cleanup and litter management and increase funding for this work in the FY 2023 City budget now under development; and
- engage the City business community to reinforce the importance of litter control and better enforce existing City litter control ordinances where needed.

Finally, we encourage Council members and other City leaders to promote and encourage broad participation in the City Spring Clean-Up event, now scheduled for Saturday, April 2 from 10:00 to noon. This event has been supported for many years by community organizations, such as Girl Scout Troop 676 at Meridian High School, and is an excellent example of community organizations and interested individuals working together to improve our City.

We look forward to working with the City to make these efforts a success.

Sincerely,

A rectangular image showing a handwritten signature in black ink on a light-colored background. The signature appears to read "Jeff Peterson".

Jeff Peterson
VPIS President
on behalf of the Board

cc: City Manager
Environmental Sustainability Council