

Stephen F. Owen
City Manager

Birthplace of the
Council-Manager
Form of Government



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April 18, 2017

Tracy C. Pyles, Jr.
Chairman, Augusta County Board of Supervisors
18 Government Center Lane
Verona, VA 24482

Re: Proposal for Augusta County Circuit Courthouse and Public Safety

Dear Chairman Pyles:

I appreciate your desire to seek a solution for the Augusta County Circuit Courthouse, and for taking the time to discuss the matter with Mr. Owen and me last month. City Council has reviewed your proposal of March 30th, and believes the following next steps would be most productive in achieving a solution acceptable to the City and the citizens of both of our localities:

1. So that we can move forward with a serious conversation about the County's court facilities, let's leave public safety initiatives out of our discussions. It is clear that the most critical question in need of an answer is how to address the County's needs for its court facilities. A discussion of Staunton's E911 Center and Fire & Rescue facilities will only muddy what should be thoughtful and, hopefully, productive conversations regarding measures to resolve that question.
2. The City is prepared to engage in a joint, open and transparent public process with the County to find a solution for the courthouse. I would hope that such a process would result in a project acceptable to the County, the City and the citizens of both localities. This process might include the formation of a joint study group composed of interested individuals from each locality, including numerous already invested stakeholders and those with expertise in historic structures, to assist in reaching a mutually acceptable resolution.

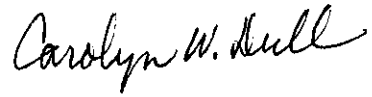
And finally, I would be remiss if I did not state that the City will never agree to tear down, or permit others to tear down, the City's protected historic landmarks and structures, nor would the City disregard its own laws and procedures, including the superseding of the Historic Preservation Commission, to allow anyone to demolish protected historic buildings in the City. Such precedent-setting actions would not align with the City's values and Council's vision for the City. My fellow Council members and I

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treasure and celebrate Staunton's uniquely historic character. To be a participant in or enabler of its destruction would be a breach of the City's moral philosophy.

I look forward to a response from you regarding your thoughts about these next steps.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Carolyn W. Dull". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Carolyn W. Dull
Mayor