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Marshall Minute



SEPTEMBER 2020

AND COVERING FROM MARCH TO SEPTEMBER DUE TO COVID-19

Come to the MBRA's

1st Community Meeting

since the mandatory shutdown!

Tuesday, September 8th

We'll be discussing:

CANCEL PROJECT drive

Van Metre developments

Town Incorporation

beginning at 7 pm at the

Marshall Community Center

Auditorium, 4133 Rectortown Rd

Marshall, VA

Seating will be limited due to social distancing and Covid-19.

Must wear a mask & register to enter.

Please check our Facebook and website for updated info closer to the event!

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**Stay tuned for  
Upcoming Events:**

**MBRA's Fall Sidewalk Stroll & October Showcase Mixer**

**Ruritans Yard Sale**

**Sat. Oct. 17th, 8am-2pm  
Outside spaces, \$15 to bring  
your own table**

**Call Debbie: 540-718-3177**

Visit MBRA's website:  
**www.MarshallVa.ORG**  
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Marshall Minute by email!  
Send your request to:  
mbraeditor@gmail.com  
540-364-3400

## UPDATE ON MARSHALL MAIN STREET

### **Contrary to what you may have been told**

and despite the Fauquier Times article of 8/12/2020, page 9, referring to the "Main Street Improvements project approved by the Fauquier County Board of Supervisors" (BOS), the proposed One-Block Main Street Improvement Project **has yet to be voted on by** the BOS to award contracts. It is not a "done deal." Set us free for the low to no-cost options! **CANCEL Wasteful Bait & Switch Money Pit! See what you can do now-->**

**Envision a Marshall Main Street that stays true to itself and its community and does not crumble Marshall or our businesses!**

The sooner the BOS Cancels the wasteful, bait & switch one-block money pit, the sooner VDOT can proceed to repair and maintain our sidewalks and curbs, pave our Main Street, and install upgraded ADA compliant ramps—all without added cost to us! This regressive, expensive proposed County Project has kept Marshall in limbo for years. It's time to move forward with the MBRA's **Alternative Plan** using low to no-cost options, step-by-step, to improve **ALL** of Main Street!

**There is only ONE MARSHALL  
Just say NO to Project and Save Marshall!**

The MBRA, as the original grant applicant, has repeatedly asked Supervisor McDaniel and the Board to Cancel the Project and set us free from this Boondoggle, as have many of you!

**The Anglican Church of  
St. John the Baptist**

Is holding services compliant with guidelines & hospitality gatherings have taken place outdoors. See their website:

<http://st-johnthebaptist.org/>

**More info, call (540) 364-2554**

4107 Winchester Road  
Marshall, VA 20115

**We've heard your questions about the Main Street Project:**

**I feel our voices don't count— isn't it a 'done deal'?**

**What about the 'secret' committee meetings we've heard Supervisor McDaniel has been holding on the Main St. Project?**

**What does Supervisor Mary Leigh McDaniel say about the Project?**

**What does the Fauquier BOS think about it?**

**What does the community say?**

**What is the MBRA's position on the Project?**

**Turn the page for answers to these questions, plus helpful info from the MBRA's Feb. 12 & Mar. 3, 2020 meetings! —>**

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**Do you feel disenfranchised?**

You're not alone! Many citizens we talk to in Marshall express that they feel their voices do not count and are not represented by their County government. A common sentiment is that decisions are made by "good 'ole boys & girls" behind closed doors and the people have no voice.

Also, many believe what they've been told by their Supervisor and other project proponents—that "it's a done deal." Such comments lead citizens to believe they are helpless to stop this bait & switch money pit. FACT: The contracts have not yet been awarded and there has never been a public hearing on the design plans. The MBRA is pursuing all options to get this flawed One-Block Project Cancelled Now!

**On January 16, 2020 the MBRA met with**

**Supervisor Mary Leigh McDaniel**

**MBRA asks:** What would it take for you to back away from the Project?

**Mary Leigh says,** "Nothing at this point. This (Main Street Project) was one of my platforms for election and I won by a landslide so that tells me that the people of Marshall District want this. . ."

**In spite of the MBRA's formal public statements beginning September 2018, repeated communications against the Project, and the numerous complaints against it, when we mentioned opposition to the Project Mary Leigh told us,**

"So far I haven't heard anything, really. After all the work that's been done over the last 10 years, all the time and money and effort that's been spent on a project like this, I just don't see anything that would, at this point, stop it."

I see my job as doing everything I can to make sure it goes forward"

**MBRA asks:** If you were to find out that there were massive

amounts of people . . . within the Service District and the Lighting District who do not want it (Project) compared to what you've been exposed to so far?

**Mary Leigh answers:** "At this point, I mean, I would be happy to hear what anybody has to say but at this point I don't see that that would change what's already been in process for 10 years."

Regrettably, it is as though Chairwoman McDaniel has shut out the MBRA, the original grant applicant for the Project, from meetings and updates about the Project since we came out against it in September 2018. The MBRA has reached out to VDOT, via our Commonwealth Transportation Board Rep. and VDOT staff for clear information our own County refuses to provide us.

**On February 27, 2020 the MBRA met with**

**Supervisor Mary Leigh McDaniel**

**MBRA asks:** Have you had meetings on the Marshall Main Street Project in Marshall?

**Mary Leigh says,** ". . . We have the Marshall Main Street Improvement Committee . . ."

**MBRA asks:** So who is on that?

**Mary Leigh says,** "It's a private group that gets together, it's not really public, it's not a County group."

**MBRA asks:** And what is it called?

**Mary Leigh says,** There's really no name for it, that's just an acronym I just use for special purposes."

*The MBRA and the public are concerned about Mary Leigh's 'secret' or private meetings being held re: federal monies administered through VDOT for a public road Project which taxes Marshall citizens without their consent for a Project they do not want! How then can there be no minutes, neither names of attendees nor name of group be disclosed, yet they are meeting in taxpayer funded space regarding the proposed Main Street Project to raise your Special Lighting taxes 400%?*

**What does the BOS say?**

*The BOS has been for this Project. If it were to be cancelled, the BOS is concerned with paying back VDOT for the approximately half-million dollars spent thus far on the Project. If the County ignored the people and spent funds anyway, perhaps the County should cover that.*

**What does the community say?**  
*About 90% tell us no, they don't want the Project!*

**What does the MBRA say?**  
*Cancel the Project Now and set us free from this Boondoggle so we can proceed with what VDOT is already paid to do for our Main Street!*

Today's **MBRA now has restored 501(c)(4) status** and has filed on time for 2019. Current MBRA leadership, with the assistance of our excellent tax preparer, has corrected the mistakes of prior leadership who failed to file tax returns for over a dozen years and lost the tax-exempt status of our organization. At least 5 different individuals served as either President, Treasurer, or as both during the 13 years that no one filed tax returns for the MBRA. **These are some of the same people who have brought you the Main Street Project!** It is concerning that those former leaders also supported the creation of and currently support the proposed \$6.2 million One-Block Main Street Project with the 400% Special Tax increase.

### **4th Annual LOVE MARSHALL February 11, 2020 Meeting Notes:**

**Mary Wilkerson, President,** opened the meeting at 7:39 pm. She introduced herself and welcomed everyone to our 4th Annual Love Marshall Community Meeting.

**School Board Chairman Duke Bland** gave a detailed update on the middle school topic and more. He announced that he is now serving as **Chairman of the Fauquier County School Board!** He now sits on more committees & subcommittees than ever before.

**Middle Schools:** Lots of publicity. The subject has been around since 2005 when he first came on the School Board. Duke said that Mary Leigh and he had breakfast the other day, the School Board had their meeting last night, and now they are down to two options. Taylor Middle School is the school of choice to renovate.

A & E is already awarded for **Cedar Lee Middle School**. A 300-student wing to be added onto C.L.M.S.

Because of all the activity in the New Baltimore area with new housing projects coming up, now: Auburn Middle School. Auburn was originally built with the idea that it would need another wing that could hold 300 students. So, the School Board's plan is to:

- Add a 300-student addition to Auburn Middle School, while they also
- Add a 300-student addition to Cedar Lee Middle School.

Why? Right now in Warrenton, there are about 200 kids coming to Taylor Middle School from Bealeton, from almost as far as the light in Opal.

When looking at the Rt. 605 corridor in Warrenton, some come into Warrenton Middle School and some to Auburn M.S. The plan is to carve out x number of students

from Warrenton Middle School and send them to Auburn when the new wing is complete. Then, with approximately 500 kids out of Warrenton, they can move kids over to the school the County is not going to renovate while they:

- 1) Do Cedar Lee & Auburn and do redistricting to get kids where they ought to be
- 2) start renovating Taylor M.S.
- 3) look at numbers of where everyone needs to be in order to satisfy all the growth needs.

**How this affects Marshall:** Approx. 50 kids come out of Warrenton and into Marshall, from Snow Hill, Bethel Academy, & Warrenton Lakes. They are looking at how to get those kids back to their districts.

Taylor MS Capacity: 547  
Warrenton MS Capacity: 513

Duke explained that an engineering firm studied the two schools a few years ago and said that Taylor is the best bet to expand rather than Warrenton M.S. The pick up/drop off traffic is so very bad at Waterloo for Warrenton M.S. They also had looked at doing a road to alleviate that but it is \$350,000 - \$500,000 to do the road, however, it is also in a floodplain so you're talking stormwater management complications, too.

Third reason for choosing Taylor M.S. to renovate: 46 various walks of life taskforce committee they put together to study the middle school issue, and their answer was: Taylor M.S. makes the most sense.

**What will happen at Warrenton M.S.?** W.M.S. will be repurposed. The Central Complex has people from Fauquier County Public Schools and Government there. Also, someone wants to buy that land. So if the County repurposes WMS, it can fit all those people from the Central Complex there, and the County can sell the

*For a walk, a lunch, or your next event*

### **Northern Fauquier Community Park**

The 88-acre park features picnic shelters, amphitheater, small meeting room, athletic fields, playgrounds, 1.75 mile paved walking trail, indoor restrooms, fishing pond, seasonal ice skating rink.

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Phone: 540-422-8570**

Central Complex land and recoup some of the money spent on expansion.

Duke also discussed the small alternative school built in the 1930s, which does not have a kitchen, and the possible option of selling that old facility.

### **Q&A:**

**Q:** Can you build new schools rather than building onto schools; spread them out?

**A:** Duke explained that they have done studies on that and it is just not feasible. When they don't have density of students, it is just not feasible to build more schools. Also, they have to build schools where they can connect to Fauquier County water and sewer. Land is so valuable along the Rt. 29 Corridor that they cannot do a new school there.

**Q:** How, emotionally, does it affect the students to have to change schools?

**A:** Duke answered that they will take all of that into consideration. Typically that is an issue in high school. Middle School students tend to still be very fluid. Duke is going to meet with the County to discuss the CIP and will discuss in greater detail how they are going to do things. He explained that timing is of the essence; it is very important and they will try to nail things down as quickly as possible.

**February 11th Meeting Notes,  
continued**

**Next, Duke shared that safety and security is and always will be the #1 priority.** He shared an update toward that end. There are now more cameras in all schools than ever before. There are also SSOs and School Resource Officers in all schools.

There are extension arms on our buses with cameras on them and they have already issued 168 citations this school year to the end of January alone!

They are about to install their 1st secure vestibule in the older schools. They will have it so that you have to go into an office before you can go anywhere.

They already have plans on the first one and hope to start in the next couple of weeks. There are also sister schools with the same footprint; they're working on doing them first. They will get all of them done. It is not cheap but, again, safety and security is their #1 priority.

Additionally, Duke explained that they now have more than 500 people in our schools who are trained in things like youth mental health, as part of the first aid initiative. They are extensively trained to help. For example, to identify when a child is having an issue, whether at school or at home, and to get them help. Duke has no doubt that they have saved several students. There is also a facility here in Marshall that is helping students.

Duke also spoke about equity. Equity = to find and identify kids who need extra help and provide the resource technology or tool to help that child succeed. Fauquier has a 94.1% graduation rate; way above average. Our rate used to be 89% in the past, so this is fantastic.

**Technological & Trade School:** they want to remove the stigma. Lots of kids do it out of choice. Fauquier Public Schools also has a nationally ranked program for it at Fauquier High School. Whether mechanical, automobile, EMT, nursing, electrical, cosmetology, etc., whatever a student wants to do with his or her life, they want to help him or her to do that.

Additionally, Duke explained that last Fall, a Fairfax County counterpart told Duke about a Grow Your Own Teachers (GYOT) Initiative that involves guaranteeing them a job. Duke explained that we, too, are now starting that G.Y.O.T. initiative. Duke further explained that Fauquier County Schools have done a very good job in closing the teacher comprehension scale in order to be more competitive.

Duke wrapped up by saying that these are some great things that the school system is doing. They are also doing the budget now. This time, they will probably need only a 4.1% increase from the County this year. Unfortunately, it looks like they will lose about \$300,000 from the state.

**Marshall District Supervisor Mary Leigh McDaniel** was unable to attend this evening.

Our featured speaker of the evening was **Reverend Jonathan Ostman of the local Anglican Church of St. John the Baptist.** For those who don't know, St. John's has been in Marshall since about the mid-1990s, originally meeting at the chapel at the Marshall Manor. Towards the end of the 1990s, they started leasing the church right there at the corner of the intersection where they are to this day. They have been in there since about 1997. They have big news they are excited to share tonight! To enthusiastic applause, they announced that after about 15 years or so of negotiating, they

finally closed on the property and have purchased it, so as of last Thursday, they have possession of the property! Now that it is something that they can recognize as theirs and have the responsibility to maintain it, they also recognize that with that comes a responsibility to the community. They want to be able to expand their outreach and work with people in the community, as well. They see a bright future ahead! They are still in a little bit of shock. That is their big news that they wanted to share with everybody and felt this would be the appropriate forum to do so. The Anglican Church of St. John the Baptist has been lovingly caring for the property for years, and they have put a lot of work into it particularly in recent years.

Sunday services are:  
8:00 am - Low Mass  
9:00 am - Mattins  
9:30 am - Christian Formation  
10:30 am - Mass

Visit them at 4107 Winchester Road, Marshall, VA 20115. See their website: [st-johnthebaptist.org](http://st-johnthebaptist.org) & contact them by phone: 540-364-2554 or email: [contact@st-johnthebaptist.org](mailto:contact@st-johnthebaptist.org)

**Mary Wilkerson, President,** gave an update on the proposed Marshall Main Street Improvement Project. If you've been reading the Marshall Minute newsletters, etc. etc., you've seen that our organization, the MBRA, is the original grant applicant from over 10 years ago. The Project was supposed to be for all of Main Street. Virginia laws changed a few years after, and the County took over the Project. The Project was shrunk down to one block.

Originally, the Project was to bury all utility lines. The attractiveness for many people for the Main Street Improvement Project, was the idea of all the utility lines being buried. That has been something that has been problematic to get done.

February 11th Meeting Notes, concluded

We have been following this closely. The community did not get any design plans from the County until the end of August/ beginning of September of 2018, so it is not like this plan existed since the beginning of the grant -- it did not; it has evolved.

Everyone in Marshall's Lighting Tax District, whether you are a business or a resident, your Special Tax will go up 5x--that's a 400% Special Tax increase for this Project. There are approximately 800 property owners in the Lighting Tax District that will have to bear the burden.

We have met with each one of the Supervisors. Mary Leigh McDaniel and Holder Trumbo are of course very strongly for this Project. Holder has recused himself in the past since he is a property owner. The Supervisor writing the grant applications did not recuse himself when he was a Supervisor. He has business interests in this one block.

We went to the state-appointed Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) representative. We have found that we get the most reliable information when we go to her and to VDOT. A lot of the information we try to get from the County has been confusing and difficult to get from the County. The County is very much for this Project; we, as the original grant applicant, are not for this Project and we provided both the County and VDOT a Resolution to that effect.

Among the reasons why the MBRA opposes this Project are because there are so many flaws, it is high maintenance, and the County is always saying they have no money. The County cannot even maintain what we have now; how can they maintain this complex Project once done?

We walked Main Street with two VDOT officials a few weeks ago.

**VDOT confirmed that the County is to be responsible for the maintenance and repair of the sidewalks if this Project is done.**

We were told by Project supporters that we need this Project because some places puddle and there is water on the sidewalks. Turns out, that is VDOT's responsibility.

When we walked Main Street with VDOT, they explained that a ½ inch or greater difference in sidewalk grade is what VDOT will fix. They explained they also retro-fit for handicap accessibility.

Because VDOT is already paid for with our state dollars, that would be no cost to us nor to the approx. 800 property owners in the Lighting Tax District, which some Supervisors want to expand to be the entire Service District.

VDOT has been holding off on doing its normal repaving and maintenance of Main Street because this Project has been pending for years. So the result is that we are not getting it looking as nice as our state taxpayer dollars have already paid for it to be.

MBRA president spoke about the other issues with the Project, including the issue of rock. She then shared MBRA's vision for Main Street going forward if the Project is cancelled, including low cost options for streetlights, etc.

Our very special 4th Annual Love Marshall Door Prize Raffle finished out the evening. Congratulations to our 14 prize winners!

All are encouraged to show up at the Board of Supervisors meeting on 3/12/2020, where you can also speak during Citizens' Time.

*The meeting closed with the Pledge of Allegiance at 8:54pm. Minutes by Mary-Elizabeth Wilkerson, Secretary. See meeting video at [www.MarshallVa.ORG](http://www.MarshallVa.ORG)*

**The MBRA has taken much heat since Sept. 11, 2018 when we announced our position, as the original grant applicant, against the County's One-Block Main Street Project.**

Further research has only solidified our opposition. Since our announcement in 2018, the County has made it even more difficult to obtain information and clear answers from them and we have had to reach out to VDOT in order to receive what our County should have been providing us.

We've been reaching out to Chairwoman Mary Leigh McDaniel (our Marshall District Supervisor), our Board of Supervisors (BOS), County staff, and the Marshall community, meeting with VDOT, and researching the Project.

**The MBRA is here for you!**

Questions for you to ponder:

**Should real estate developers and investors determine what happens with our community, or should the residents, and small businesses determine that?**

**Who should make decisions for those in the Special Lighting Tax and/or Service District. . . those outside those Districts?**

**Those who live in the greater Marshall Magisterial District but who do not live in town?**

**Or those who live within Marshall's Special Lighting Tax and/or Service Districts?**

**Real estate developers and investors will still be able to make money in Marshall when this Project is cancelled and the peoples' will is obliged.**

**We ask Chairwoman McDaniel & BOS to Cancel the Project Now!**

**March 3, 2020 Meeting Notes:**

**Special 'Cancel Project' Meeting**

Almost 50 people attended the MBRA's special Cancel Project Meeting at the Marshall Community Center on Monday, March 2. Mary Wilkerson, President, opened the meeting and welcomed everyone to this special Cancel Project Meeting, which the MBRA is hosting due to the huge amount of opposition to the Marshall Main Street Project that Supervisor Mary Leigh McDaniel is driving, and to provide a safe space for people to come hear an update and learn how to cancel the Project.

Mary Wilkerson gave an update on the Project, the MBRA's position on it and countless hours spent on trying to Cancel the Project Now. She explained that Alison DeTuncq, who serves as our region's Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) member representative, has been very helpful and clear in facilitating access to answers.

This Main Street Improvement Project has been holding Marshall in limbo for years, as VDOT will not conduct their usual maintenance and repaving of Main Street when this Project is pending. This Project started 12 years ago.

The MBRA President and Secretary have met with each of the Supervisors regarding the Project twice already this year, in January and February. We met with Scott District Supervisor Holder Trumbo and asked him if he is open to the Project being cancelled. Mr. Trumbo has recused himself from taking a vote in the past since he owns property on Marshall's Main Street. Supervisor Trumbo very much wants the Project, and said he has a lot of interest in the Project. We met with Kevin Burke, Fauquier County Attorney. Mr. Burke explained to us that he

does not advise the Board of Supervisors on the legality of things or conflicts of interest. He further explained that it is up to each County Supervisor to self-monitor and self-report any interests they have, and only if a Supervisor comes to Mr. Burke with a question will he give them advice. Thus, if a Supervisor does not bring it up, they are not going to know. Mr. Burke also offered that he does not know what conflicts/interests our former Marshall District Supervisor, Peter Schwartz, may or may not have had.

One question is, what happens if the County starts this Project and it gets stuck?

**County Attorney Mr. Burke also stated regarding our question about the 2013 BOS Resolution they have not followed, that the Supervisors can change their minds and do anything they want.**

When we met with Marshall District Supervisor Mary Leigh McDaniel shortly thereafter, she had Miles Friedman, Director of Economic Development, sit in as well. We asked Mr. Friedman if there are any studies/data to show how this Main Street Project would benefit Marshall? His answer was no.

The meeting portion finished at 6:57 PM and Q&A with the audience followed. Many from the audience shared their opposition, and asked questions.

A lady in The Plains had informed us that they learned from their experience that narrowing the road did not slow speeds as they had been told. What slowed vehicles was having parking on the road, which Marshall already has. Also, we are a horse-centric and cattle-centric community, and this Project is for neither.

*~End of 3/2/2020 meeting notes~*

***Be a Champion for Marshall!***

*Even if you can afford the 400% increase in the Special Lighting Tax, think of your neighbors and long-time family businesses!*

**Now is the time to be heard! What can you do?**

- ~**Email** the Supervisors and cc MBRA; see our website: [www.marshallva.ORG](http://www.marshallva.ORG) for all the email addresses
  - ~**Show up** with us at Citizens' Time, BOS Meeting 9/10/2020 6:30 pm at the Warren Green Building, 10 Hotel St, Warrenton, VA
  - ~**See our meeting videos &** past newsletters on our website
  - ~**Sign the online petition** found on our website and here: [www.ShapingMarshallTogether.com](http://www.ShapingMarshallTogether.com)
  - ~**Sign a form letter** for us to deliver to BOS
  - ~**Display a window sticker & spread the word**
  - ~**Donate** on our website to our Cancel Project efforts as we are considering all options to stop this project, including legal
- Contact us at 540-364-3400; [mbraeditor@gmail.com](mailto:mbraeditor@gmail.com)**  
**Wish to CANCEL ONE-BLOCK PROJECT?**  
**Come out Thursday, September 10, 2020 @ 6:30 pm**  
 Fauquier County Board of Supervisors Meeting  
 Join us at the Warren Green Bldg, 10 Hotel Street, Warrenton, VA

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