



Mount Vernon Civic Association, Inc.

Winter 2010/2011

www.MountVernonCivicAssociation.org

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General Membership Meeting

Wednesday, January 12, 2011

Speaker

Barbara Doyle, CEO of Inova Mount Vernon Hospital

Subject

Changes underway at Mount Vernon Hospital

Where and When

Washington Mill Elementary
7:00 PM pizza and soda
7:30 PM program

President's Message

Happy 2011 Friends and Neighbors!

As I begin my fifth year as President of the Mount Vernon Civic Association, I remain deeply grateful for the wonderful support that I receive from all our faithful Association members, dedicated Board members, and generous advertisers and sponsors. MVCA is OUR Association, and I welcome your input and participation!

Thanks to Peter and Lee Braun from Long and Foster Realtors' "Poole/Braun Team" for speaking at our October 13, 2010 meeting about the current state of real estate in the Mount Vernon area and trends in the overall real estate market. Their presentation was well received and followed by a lively Q&A session.

The next General Membership meeting of the Mount Vernon Civic Association is January 12, 2011 at the Washington Mill School. Barbara Doyle, CEO of Inova Mount Vernon Hospital, will talk about the changes underway at our community's nearest hospital (Fort Belvoir notwithstanding) and future plans to grow and strengthen health care delivery services there. I'm sure that this is a presentation that you will not want to miss! Pizza at 7:00 pm. Our meeting starts at 7:30. See you there.

As you may know, efforts are underway within the Mount Vernon District to comprehensively assess cell tower needs and placement options. This directly affects us as we are a "service disadvantaged" area and thus a ripe vicinity for a new tower. Recently, the Fairfax County Planning Commission deferred consideration of request to erect a 100 foot cell tower at St. James Church pending further



Emergency Phone: 911

Non-Emergency: 703-691-2131

Neighborhood Watch Coordinator: Cólín Owens (703) 780-5218

review. Ultimately, the goal is provide desired service levels while maintaining the aesthetic and historic attributes of our area to the maximum extent possible. If you have any thoughts on this subject, please provide them to me.

At the December 22, 2010 meeting of the Mount Vernon Council of Civic Associations (MVCCA), I voted in favor of a resolution from the Environment and Recreation Committee to make development of affordable housing at North Hill contingent on appropriate storm water and tree management and secured funding for the planned county park adjacent. The resolution narrowly passed, to the consternation of many affordable housing proponents in attendance. I believe that construction of this housing at North Hill is done deal. That was not the issue. However, I supported this resolution because it recommends that the County

do with its own property what it expects its citizens to do on theirs and it seeks to ensure that the comprehensive plan for this 33 acre parcel, including the park, will be implemented. I would like to especially thank Mike Habib, our E&R representative, for his work on the committee and for educating me on the pertinent issues in advance of the meeting. If you would like to read the resolution, you can find it at http://www.mvcca.org/pz/2010-12_NH-res-by-ER.pdf.

Supervisor Hyland has announced February 5, 2011 as the date for his annual Mount Vernon Town Meeting. I highly encourage you to consider attending. Many of our local elected and appointed officials will be there. This is a great opportunity to hear first hand from them what they are thinking and tell them personally what is on your mind. I believe that this is an excellent example of grass roots democracy at work

and I will be there. I hope that some of you will join me.

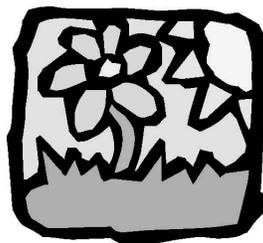
Membership renewal letters will be coming out shortly. I hope you will renew your membership, or join the MVCA if you are not already a member. 2011 is a Directory year so all dues-paying members will receive the updated 2011 MVCA Community Directory that is chock-a-block full of great information. You also get four free pizza dinners, great meetings and speakers, community advocacy, and the best neighborhood picnic in all of Mount Vernon. What a deal! Thanks in advance for your support.

I wish you a successful and prosperous New Year!

John Skudlarek
President, MVCA

Eco-Fair Proposed for Earth Day 2011

The Mount Vernon Council of Citizens Associations, Environment and Recreation chair proposed that the E&R committee organize and sponsor an Eco-Fair and Tour on Earth Day (April 22, 2011) to highlight environmental innovations, big and small, and good environmental practices being adopted by residents, businesses, churches or schools in the Mount Vernon area. Examples of projects that might be on the tour would be going off the grid by installing solar panels and geothermal heating;



bay-friendly landscaping with Virginia native plants; rain gardens and rain barrels that reduce storm water runoff, composting, etc. The Eco-Fair also might bring in groups and vendors who offer services and technical expertise to help people make their homes and habits more environmentally friendly. The committee was supportive, and several members volunteered to help. The chair will prepare a brief proposal suggesting possible projects and co-sponsors and next steps.

Planning and Zoning

Proposed Costco

The MVCCA Planning and Zoning Committee heard a presentation on the proposed Costco for the empty movie theater site. Unlike the standard big-box configuration where the store is placed at the rear of the property and the parking is in front, this Costco would be placed on Richmond Highway along the southern property edge. The store entrance would face the existing Wal-Mart. While the Costco would generate less traffic than permitted under the current zoning, it would definitely add a substantial number of vehicles to an already congested area. There were also concerns about the delivery trucks that would be driving along Richmond Highway between the Beltway and the

Costco. No vote was taken because the traffic issues are yet to be resolved; the applicant will be asked to appear at the Transportation Committee in January.

New Cell Phone Towers?

The Committee viewed a PowerPoint presentation on cell phone Distributed Antenna Systems (DAS) to possibly provide cell phone coverage in the Mount Vernon area without placing tall cell towers in residential areas. DAS has been successfully deployed in other parts of Fairfax County. Each installation is customized to minimize the visual impact on the community. More details will be presented at future meetings.

National Library

A site plan for the new National Library for the Study of George Washington has been submitted to the Department of Public Works and Environmental Services at Fairfax County. Some of the particulars are:

Location: 8822 Mount Vernon Highway, Mount Vernon, VA 22121. This is northeast of the Mount Vernon Post Office within an enclave formed by Mount Vernon Memorial Highway near the terminus of the George Washington Parkway at Mount Vernon.

Description: The site development area is 17.8 acres and proposes a scholar's residence of 6,646 gross square feet and a library of 43,492 gross square feet. The proposed development results in a floor area ratio of 0.06. Proposed open space for the project is calculated at 673,873 square feet.

Storm drainage: The proposed construction may alter storm drainage and storm water management will be utilized to mitigate impacts in accordance with County regulations. They plan to use bioretention areas such as rain gardens and bioswales, and other devices to slow down the water and filter it then collect it in the existing pipe that runs under Route 235S just west of the post office. South of 235S is a 75-year-old pipe that runs through a ravine and down to the Potomac by way of the Pioneer Farm area. That pipe is in bad shape and will be replaced with a new pipe along the same route which will reduce erosion and help protect wetlands along the way.

The chiller and transformer for the library will be approximately 600 feet from the nearest property line. Their acoustical engineer calculated noise levels well below the Fairfax County noise limit at the neighbors' property lines. They are not building in a wetland area or anywhere swampy or in the area of the vernal pool.

The plan is subject to approval on January 24, 2011. You can view it at Fairfax County Plan and Document Control, 12055 Government Center Parkway, Suite 506, Fairfax, VA 22035 (703-324-1730). The site plan number is 4687-SP-05. (The Wessynton Community Association is requesting that the plan be made available in an electronic format so that it will be easier to review.)

Transportation

The MVCA Transportation Chair is happy to report that Saint Nick had a stress-free Christmas with minimal air traffic and generally cooperative weather.

In other transportation-related matters, the New Year brings with it a boatload of unresolved transportation issues, including the unknown – and as far as we know, unexamined - future traffic impact of the planned redevelopment of the abandoned “vacated” Mount Vernon Multiplex. As of the date of this writing, that matter will be addressed during either the January or February meeting of the Mount Vernon Council of Civic Associations (MVCCA) Planning & Zoning Committee. It is expected that a representative of the developers of a planned Costco store will send both legal counsel and engineering experts to speak before the MVCCA Planning and Zoning Committee, and your Transportation Chair will provide an update as information becomes available.

Although the Multiplex site is situated in the Lee District, any redevelopment of the site will undoubtedly have an impact on Mount Vernon residents. In addition, the owner of the site commonly referred to as the former “Smitty’s Lumberteria” is interesting in learning what sort of development is preferred by

You can review the comprehensive plan, dating from 2007 and amended to be current through September of 2010, at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/comprehensiveplan/area4/mtvernon1.pdf>

the surrounding communities. Whether a representative of the property owner will actually be present at the January meeting of the MVCCA Planning and Zoning Committee remains to be seen. But given that the county’s current Comprehensive Plan language calls for a “town center”-type development, which gives wide leeway to the design, I think we should all be at least interested, if not concerned, about what may happen to Smitty’s.

I note for the record that the aforementioned plan also makes mention of a monorail (see the map on page 5 of the

comprehensive plan if you don’t quite believe me. . .) as one possible alternative for extending Metro from Huntington. If any of you are familiar with “The Simpsons” (particularly the episode in which the town of Springfield purchases a monorail), you’ll understand why I suspect that much in the way of planned transportation-related development will be slow to arrive in our area. Enough cynicism. Happy 2011, safe driving, and good health to all!

Pete Esser
Transportation Chair

Neighborhood Watch

Our Watch volunteers report a generally quiet scene in our neighborhood over the past two months. There have been a few thefts of items from unlocked vehicles on Neptune, Robertson, and Allwood, however. We notice that some residents are not as careful as they might in keeping garages closed at night and in allowing undelivered newspapers to accumulate in their driveways while they are out of town. We are pleased to report that the Mansion House Yacht Club gate is closed at night. Together with the new

security arrangements at the Yacht Haven Club, this relieves our concerns about recurrences of last year’s events. Nevertheless, we have two patrols on our streets most nights of the week keeping an eye out for anything unusual. The patrol schedule has been arranged through next August; but we can always avail of the assistance of any new volunteers to replace some long-serving members of the community on this detail.

Cóilín Owens, Coordinator (cowens7@gmu.edu)

Public Safety

Our first significant snowfall on December 26 was a wake-up call. We need to be ready (flashlights, batteries, bottled water, etc) for possible electric power outages affecting our homes, street lights and traffic control signals. Drivers need to be aware of increased stopping distances and unpredictable "black ice" as well as ice packs under new snow. Use extreme care in the vicinity of school buses. Pedestrians should consider wearing reflective arm strips or other visibility aids during periods of near and actual darkness. Small flashlights and cell phones are recommended also for exercise walkers and runners.

For both safety and anti-theft reasons do not leave car engines running unattended at stores or in driveways.

The FCPD Fraud Squad urges residents NOT to respond to requests from strangers to send "advances" or "partial payments"



for schemes such as purported lottery winnings, etc.

The MVCCA Public Safety Committee recently had an excellent presentation by a FCPD Police Officer on the Fairfax County Crime Solvers program (1-866-411-TIPS). She pointed out a number of crimes where citizens' information had been instrumental in reporting or resolving crimes. Callers can remain anonymous. The FC program is a member of the National Capital Area Crime Solvers network.

Remember to call 911 if emergency assistance (Police,

Fire, Ambulance/Rescue) is needed. Be prepared to give information such as type of incident, address and/or closest intersection and if reporting a crime -the details of any vehicles involved. The MVCCA Public Safety Committee recently made a detailed visit to the County 911 Center and it is a very impressive 24 x 7 multi-agency (including FCPD, FCFD, VDOT, Virginia State police, etc) high-tech facility which also has the ability to support increased staffing if/ as natural or manmade emergencies unfold. The 911 Center has excellent communications with all relevant agencies and public utilities. We all can be very grateful for the vision of those who planned it, built it and for those who work there as well as the various First Responders..

Best wishes for a Happy and Safe New Year!

*Your Neighbor-
John A. Hurley*

You Have a Chance to Win This Prize!

Everyone who attends the upcoming civic association meeting will be entered in a drawing to **win a \$50 Gift Certificate** from Brittany's Restaurant and Sports Bar in the heart of Lake Ridge. They offer a full service menu with pasta, steaks, seafood, soups and salads and are located at 12449 Dillingham Square in Woodbridge, VA.

Brittany's is a family owned business and is operated by Bob Geck and his son. Bob and his wife are local residents, MVCA members and he is a retired USN Captain.



Join the fun at the
MVCA
Community Picnic

The MVCA picnic is an annual outdoor event for all residents of our community. It just keeps getting better and better, with food, music, games, and camaraderie. Join us this year—our tentative date is June 11, 2011, 1PM—5PM. The location is being confirmed at this time.



Mt. Vernon, Virginia

Membership and Directory

Preparations are underway for the new 2011-2012 MVCA Directory. We will be sending our annual membership renewal letter later this month. Please return your 2011 annual membership dues and renewal form promptly so that we can insure the information printed in the new directory is accurate.

Don't forget, if your child babysits, mows lawns etc... please include the information in the renewal form. Also, if you know that a neighbor is new on your street, would you let them know about the association so that they won't throw out our form as j*u*n*k mail?

As part of the membership update, we will be soliciting for advertisers for the new 2011-2012 MVCA Directory. For this next

issue of the directory, we will again be offering MVCA member and non-member rates. If you are a business owner that would like to place an ad in the next directory, please contact Ken Poortinga to request an ad rate kit.

Looking ahead to future newsletters and directories, we would like to hear from "original owners" or long time owners (maybe your parents were original owners?). Some of our houses are 50 years old and we'd like to celebrate our age by sharing old photos and stories of the Mount Vernon area. If you have any old photos of houses and families or interesting stories, please contact me at eeeb@verizon.net

Elizabeth Bancroft 703.360.4206

*Ken Poortinga 703.360.7740
ken8487@verizon.net*

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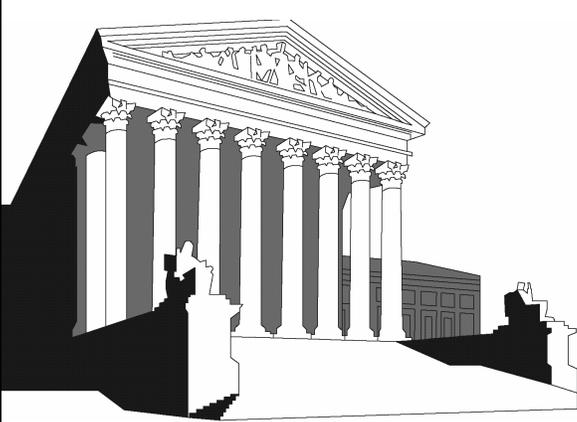
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