



Mount Vernon Civic Association, Inc.

Spring 2013

www.MountVernonCivicAssociation.org

Belle Rive • Ferry Landing Estates • Ferry Landing Villa • Ferry Point Estates • Mount Vernon Forest • Mount Vernon Park • Oxford • Riverwood • Vernon Square • Westgate • Wycliffe • Yacht Haven

Mount Vernon Civic Association General Membership Meeting

March 13, 2013

Speaker:

Animal Control Officer
Andrew Sanderson

Topic:

Animal encounters — wild
and domestic — in our
neighborhood

Where and When:

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



The next MVCA general membership meeting has been scheduled for Wednesday, March 13 at Washington Mill Elementary School. Our guest speaker for the meeting will be Animal Control Officer Andrew Sanderson, who works with the Fairfax County Animal Services Division. Animal Control Officers get involved in a wide array of animal encounters whether it's a report of a stray dog, raccoons roaming around in

President's Message

living rooms or possums poking into garbage cans. With the recent increased sightings of wildlife in our area, the never-ending of the barking dog down the street and other critter challenges, we hope that you will take this opportunity of participating in the presentation with your questions and comments. In addition to our speaker, we will provide you with committee reports, current issues affecting our community, and invite those present to offer questions or comments for the community's consideration. We look forward to seeing you there.

The annual membership dues letter was mailed last month. We ask that you continue your membership (or join if not a member) and your support by completing the information form and mailing it with your dues at your earliest opportunity so that you may enjoy all that MVCA has to offer. We thank those of you that have returned your form and dues. For those that have expressed an interest in volunteering for one of our

many committees – you will be contacted soon.

Traffic calming efforts for Cherry Tree Drive and Washington Mill Elementary School have kicked into a higher gear. Due to the lack of movement by the county in addressing our concerns, the MVCA Task Force has made a concentrated effort to refocus the county, VDOT and the Fairfax County School Board on this matter. The task force has been in recent contact with School Board Member Dan Storck and Supervisor Hyland in a multi-pronged approach to remedy the unsafe traffic situations incurred daily by the Cherry Tree Drive residents and elementary school students. There is more to be found on this subject in the following pages.

Our Annual Community Picnic has been scheduled for Saturday, May 18 at St. James' Episcopal Church. We invite all in our community to join us for great food, live music and family fun. You will note that we have scheduled it earlier in the season so as to not conflict with the many

school graduation parties generally held in June.

I invite all to spend a few moments reviewing this newsletter as it contains important information occurring within our community that will be of interest to you. Please contact me, our directors or committee chairs if we can be of assistance.

*Paul Schray, President
Mount Vernon Civic Association*

Planning and Zoning

An initial presentation has been made to request a Special Exception approval to permit approximately 550 cubic yards of fill in the property's floodplain at 835 Herbert Springs Road. The Special Exception includes the installation of a rip-rap revetment and topographic grading that has already occurred. The difficulty with the action is that piers were built extending into the Potomac River and the applicant did not obtain a permit from Maryland since they own the 'property' to the low water mark along Virginia's shores. Virginia does have sovereign regulatory authority over the buildings, structures, and uses appurtenant to the Virginia shoreline properties. The National Park Service has authority over the dock. Some of the docks will be removed.

The fill associated with the revetment was necessary to repair a failed concrete bulkhead. The remainder of the fill was accessory to the construction, use and enjoyment of a pier.

Current status is that the Virginia Resources Commission, the Wetlands Board, Virginia Marine Resources Commission, and DPWES are working the request. Mr. Flannigan indicated the Planning Commission meeting has been delayed to May 22, 2013 for this item.

The representative from Wellington Civic Association (WCA) asked that the applicant come to their meeting since this property is in their civic association. The representative wanted the applicant to explain the situation and their request for the Special Exception. The WCA has some experience with this kind of request.

Karan Cerutti

Education Committee

At our last MVCCA Education Committee meeting a resolution was approved (4-1). The resolution titled "Meaningful Citizen Input to Fairfax County's FY2014 Budget Process" resolved to request that the "Fairfax County Board of Supervisors advertise a maximum residential real property tax rate applicable to FY2014 of no less than \$1.15." The logic was to express our willingness to allow the Board the flexibility to raise the property tax to a level needed to meet the educational and other needs of the county. I viewed this resolution as a "green light" to the Board of Supervisors to raise taxes and voted against the proposal. The full proposal can be read on the MVCCA website.



The Fairfax County School Board has adopted the FY 2014 Advertised Budget of \$2.5 billion, a net increase of 2.7 percent, or \$65.7 million, from the FY 2013 Approved Budget. The FY 2014 budget includes 292.5

additional positions to address membership growth—projected to be 184,393 in FY 2014—and student demographic changes. Details of the budget can be found at the FCPS website.

Louis Smith, affectionately called Mr. Smith by parents, teachers, and students, has "retired" as a volunteer at Washington Mill Elementary School for 14 years. We Thank Mr. Smith for his years of service to our children and wish him well in his future endeavors. I urge anybody with free time to volunteer at one of our Mt Vernon schools. You'll have a great experience and will benefit our youngest citizens as they grow.

In the General Assembly this past session a bill, known as the "Tebow bill," that would have allowed home-schooled students to participate in public schools' sports teams passed in the House but didn't make it out of the Senate Education and Health Committee.

*Bruce Kitchen
MVCAeducation@hotmail.com*

Cherrytree Traffic Calming Update

Your neighborhood Civic Association has been hard at work attempting to calm traffic at or near Washington Mill Elementary School (WMES). Our diligent President, Mr. Schray, has met with Supervisor Hyland twice over the last 30 days. Supervisor Hyland has assured him that he will renew the efforts to reach an acceptable resolution to this troubling situation.

Members of the Traffic Calming Task Force have met with School Board Member Dan Storck on a number of occasions over the last couple of months. He has also expressed his support and has received a letter from the MVCA with full support from the WMES PTA outlining the community's needs.

The highlights of the letter's requests are as follows:

1. Enlistment of Mr. Storck's assistance in communicating the specifics of our situation to the relevant County and State decision makers and implementers.
2. Immediate installation of effective signage posted indicating drivers are entering a "school zone": Although the smallish yellow school zone/school crossing "figures" are technically school zone signs, they are not appreciably different than the regular pedestrian crossing signs. Therefore, the existing signs are woefully ineffective to indicate the presence of increased congestion associated with school grounds.
3. Immediate demarcation on the roadway with paint to indicate where the school zone begins and ends
4. Installation of speed tables prior to the entrance to WMES school grounds: This will help mitigate the increased speed from hills in both directions.
5. Installation of flashing light school zone speed indicators

As many of you know, enrollment at WMES has skyrocketed. Over the last eight years student enrollment has increased over 21% from 501 to 609 students. We have added a significant number of modular units behind the school. Parking is tight and traffic in an out of the school grounds is at an all time high. Buses regularly park halfway in and out of the entrance in order to fit all of the required buses thereby blocking the view of drivers exiting the school.

Additionally, parents and teachers in greater numbers are forced to park on the street. Children are entering and exiting vehicles on Cherrytree Drive and surrounding streets. We do not have sidewalks on one side of Cherrytree Drive. As a result of all of these factors, this is a dangerous cocktail of cars, buses and children all trying to enter and exit the school grounds in a short period of time.

Our overall goal is to make this situation safer by reducing speeds and ensuring that drivers are aware and reminded of the school zone. At the very least, we are asking for school zone signage and indicators consistent with nearly every school in our area.

How can you help as members of the community? Many of our residents have contacts with the Board of Supervisors, School Board, VDOT and news outlets. Please help us to keep this issue on the minds of the decision makers and moving forward and remind them to see this favorably resolved.

Your MVCA Traffic Calming Task Force



Public Safety

Daylight Saving Time is here! A time for fun (gardens/lawns, walking-hiking-biking, sports, parks, etc) and sensible precautions: bike helmets and lights/reflectors/bells, LOCKING parked cars and garage doors, using motion- and/or light-sensitive outdoor lights, arranging with neighbors for newspaper and package pickups when away, carrying small flashlight/whistle/cell phone and some ID and/or phone number in case of medical or other emergency. Reflective belts/vests, arm cuffs are helpful.

Drivers — look out for pedestrians, particularly in those areas without sidewalks and for school buses and their passengers. Be particularly alert in the area of Washington Mill ES.

The County Animal Control program is a responsibility of the Fairfax County Police Department's Animal Services Division. The staff includes fully trained and sworn FCPD

Officers and can be reached via 911 (for Emergencies) and directly at 703-830-1100.

A representative of the Division will be our featured speaker at the March 13 General Meeting. Bring your questions/concerns re: Lost Pets, Embedded locator chips for Pets, Ordinances, Coyotes, Foxes, Feral animals, Injured or Dead Wildlife, Rabies shots, etc to our meeting. Thank you to Master Police Officer Greg Kottemann for facilitating this unique opportunity. MPO Kottemann can be reached through the NON-Emergency line at the Mount Vernon FCPD District 703 360 8400.

Be safe, be careful, call 911 for Emergencies. Call 703-691-2131 for non-emergency Public Safety matters. Emergency numbers are on the back cover of the MVCA Membership Directory.

Your neighbor, John Hurley 703-799-9353

Membership and Directory

We're pleased that we have received many members' MVCA annual renewal forms with their membership dues. Thank you for your continued support of the Mount Vernon Civic Association!

If you haven't yet returned your membership renewal for this year or have misplaced it, please use the form on the next page. You can also download the membership form from the MVCA website at www.MountVernonCivicAssociation.org. Please send your form along with your check for \$20 made payable to MVCA and mail to: MVCA, P.O. Box 61, Mount Vernon, VA 22121.

We invite you to attend our quarterly meetings where our guest speakers discuss topics of local interest and community advocacy. And don't forget we have free pizza and soda before meetings.

We are also planning our 7th Annual Neighborhood Picnic with food, drinks, music and a chance to meet your neighbors from our great

Mount Vernon community. The picnic is planned for May 18th — details coming soon.

We will be publishing the 2013-2014 new edition of the MVCA Membership Directory in the spring. This new Directory will be delivered to all MVCA members whose dues are current.

NOTE: If you are interested in placing an ad in the directory for your local business, please contact Ken Poortinga at 703.360.7740 or via email at ken8487@verizon.net.

Thank you for your support. Please contact us with any questions.

Elizabeth Bancroft 703-360-4206

Ken Poortinga 703-360-7740



Mount Vernon Civic Association Membership Information

Mount Vernon Civic Association, P.O. Box 61, Mount Vernon, Virginia 22121

Support Your Neighborhood Association

Your annual dues of just \$20 help give our community representation with local governments, support the local neighborhood watch program, provide essential local communications, and pay for our quarterly newsletter, biennial directory, and the annual community picnic. *Thank you for your support!*

Yes, my check is enclosed.

Information for the Neighborhood Directory

The following information will be used in the 2013 - 2014 Mount Vernon Civic Association Membership Directory. Please provide your information as you wish it to be listed so we know how you want your name printed in the directory.

Name: _____
Title (Dr/Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Military rank) Last name First name

Name: _____
Title (Dr/Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Military rank) Last name First name

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Unlisted in the directory

Email: _____

Your email address will not be published nor will it be sold or shared with other persons or businesses. It is only used to provide your Board a way to communicate with you about matters of importance in our community.

Neighborhood services: Individuals of all ages who would like to provide non-professional services to the neighborhood such as babysitting, pet care, snow shoveling, computer set-up/assist, house sitting, lawn care/mowing, tutoring, transportation can be listed in the directory at no charge.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Service</i>
_____	_____
_____	_____

Volunteer Opportunities in Your Community

We welcome and encourage all members to volunteer. Please check any of the following activities in which you would be willing to assist the MVCA:

- Appearance and Maintenance
- Block Captain
- Budget & Finance
- Consumer Affairs
- Education Matters
- Environment and Recreation
- Health and Human Services
- Local Government
- Neighborhood Watch
- Newsletter
- Membership & Directory
- Planning and Zoning Matters
- Public Safety
- Social Activities/Picnic
- Transportation

Advertise with Mount Vernon Civic Association — Your Neighborhood Voice

Contact Ken Poortinga at (703) 360-7740 or **ken8487@verizon.net** for information on placing an ad in the quarterly newsletter or the neighborhood directory. Or, check here if you would you like us to contact you with advertising information.

Budget and Finance Committee

The 2014 Fairfax County, full year, advertised budget plan was released on February 26th. Here are the highlights.

The impact of sequestration hangs over the planning process here in Fairfax County. We are beginning to see signs of the resulting economic uncertainty on office leasing and vacancy rates. "Federal spending is a significant part of our county's economy. Federal procurement in county amounts to \$25 billion. Federal civilian employment amounts to 4% and personal earning of federal employment amounts to 9.9% of total county."

County Executive Long, whose office prepared this Budget, has commented that the Budget must: 1. protect our product; 2. be flexible to respond to "unknowns;" 3. reduce structural deficits; and 4. include investments to take advantage of opportunities.

As defined by Executive Long, the Fairfax County "product" includes the following eight points: an outstanding school system, robust workforce, safe community, environmentally conscious community, safety nets, great amenities, strong financially managed county and outstanding leadership by the Board of Supervisors. Thus, the 2014 and 2015 budgets are and will be developed with the goal of keeping the "product" strong. This translates into constraining spending,

Please save the date May 4th from 9AM to noon for our Annual Neighborhood Cleanup. We are tentatively scheduled to stage this cleanup from the Washington Mill Elementary School parking lot. Cub Scout Pack 1503 has offered to lead the charge. They will focus on the park and school grounds, and will have a couple of pick-up trucks available to make a dump run.

In general, we have a very clean neighborhood thanks to our diligent homeowners and renters within the boundaries of the Civic Association. Where we will need some "extra" hands are along Old Mount Vernon Highway and Old Mansion House Road fence line. These busier roads are better suited for adults and older teenagers. Please feel free to contact Sean McCarthy at mclucid@verizon.net if there are any other specific areas that need attention. Have a great Spring!

increasing the real estate tax rate by 2 cents and limiting the increase to Fairfax County Public Schools to about 2% in 2014

General fund revenue growth is projected at 2.77% growth in 2014 and 2.91% in 2015. The majority of County revenue comes from real estate taxes. The residential equalization rate has increased by 3.5% due to strong real estate prices and sales.

On average, assessment values have increased and Executive Long has proposed a budget that includes a 2 cent increase in the rate per \$100. The expected average increase per household would be \$260. So, we should expect real estate taxes to go up in our area.

The advertised tax rate is expected to be released on March 5th. April 9th -11th are the county public hearings for the 2014 Budget. On April 30th, the 2014 Budget is scheduled to be adopted.

Sean McCarthy, Budget and Finance Chair



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Daniel F. Rinzel
ATTORNEY AT LAW

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510 KING STREET SUITE 301
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314

Transportation

Howdy Neighbors,

To be posted soon to the Mount Vernon Civic Association website is the text of a resolution penned by the Transportation Committee of the Mount Vernon Council of Citizens' Associations (MVCCA) requesting the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, the Fairfax County Department of Transportation, the Virginia Department of Transportation, and other appropriate stakeholders to work together to ensure that funds will be made available to begin the Alternative Analysis Study of Richmond Highway Corridor in 2013. This resolution was the result of lengthy discussions during the February 2013 MVCCA Transportation meeting.

While I'm not in favor of all aspects of the resolution (for example, the dilution of the initial draft's focused request for a dedicated study focusing on a future "fixed guideway" mode of mass transit, meaning an extension of the WMATA Yellow Line - or potentially a monorail or other light-rail type system), the tenor of the resolution should at least be of value in that it seeks a commitment on the part of the decision-makers to use the available funding to finally carry out the aforementioned study. And, presumably, we'll finally have a "center line" established along Route 1, which will ultimately make some meaningful improvements possible sooner rather than later.

I note for the record that any progress that might result from this is far down the road (apologies if that sounds like a pun), and that certain persons

with longstanding involvement in the Planning and Zoning Committee are agitating for "rapid bus transit" lanes, in the hope that these can be realized much more quickly than a potential Yellow Line extension. Previously, there had been some buzz about a potential monorail. While the latter concept is not off the table, both a rapid bus lane and monorail make little sense to me, apart from potential up-front cost savings. I commute via bus regularly, and on those rare occasions that I take the 101 Fairfax Connector to Huntington, valuable time is lost in the course of the "intermodal" transfer.

I also note that there was mention at the MVCCA Transportation Committee meeting that Supervisor McKay had apparently been quite vocal in his support of a theoretical Blue Line extension to Fort Belvoir, which has the potential to eclipse a theoretical Yellow Line extension from Huntington.

All this being said, Planning Commissioner Earl Flanagan reiterated that there appears to be talk in certain circles of future moves to actually extend the Yellow Line to Beacon Hill. Most if not all of you know that the Huntington Station tunnel terminates somewhere between Mount Eagle and the Penn Daw area. Therefore, it seems logical that Metrorail would at least be extended to Beacon Hill.

As always, I will keep you posted as to any relevant developments.

Peter Joseph Christian (or just plain "Pete") Esser



Biscuit Break
Dog Walking and Pet Sitting
 P.O. Box 90462
 Alexandria, VA 22309
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TRANSAMERICA

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 4212 Ferry Landing Road
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 Cell 703 798 6243
kpoortinga@gmail.com

Ken Poortinga
 Agent

Upcoming Events in Mount Vernon

- March 13MVCA general membership Meeting
- May 4Annual neighborhood cleanup day (See page 6 for details.)
- May 8MVCA general membership Meeting
- May 18Seventh annual neighborhood picnic!



Mount Vernon Civic Association, Inc.

Officers

President: Paul Schray(703) 619-9377
 1st Vice President: Pete Esser.....(703) 799-5150
 2nd Vice President: John Skudlarek(703) 704-5213
 Secretary: Karan Cerutti(703) 778-4442
 Treasurer: Tom Cleary(703) 360-3903

Directors

Mike Habib.....(703) 360-7742
 Ken Poortinga(703) 360-7740
 Dan Rinzel(703) 360-4627

Committee Chairs

Budget and Finance: Sean McCarthy(703) 360-0372
 Education: Bruce Kitchen(703) 799-6473
 Environment & Recreation: Mike Habib(703) 360-7742
 Health & Human Services: Vacant
 Membership/Directory Co-Chair:
 Elizabeth Bancroft(703) 360-4206
 Membership/Directory Co-Chair:
 Ken Poortinga(703) 360-7740
 Neighborhood Watch: Coilin Owens(703) 780-5218
 Planning & Zoning: Karan Cerutti(703) 778-4442
 Public Safety: John Hurley.....(703) 799-9353
 Transportation: Pete Esser(703) 799-5150