



Mount Vernon Civic Association, Inc.

Fall 2014

www.MountVernonCivicAssociation.org

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Please join the MVCA Board and MVCA members at the quarterly autumn community meeting scheduled for Wednesday, October 8 in the library at Washington Mill Elementary School at 7:30pm. Pizza and beverages will be served at 7:00pm so please join us.

Due to interests expressed by neighbors the board will be investigating the condition of the many neighborhood decorative walls and lighting systems located at the entrances to the communities which make up the MVCA. Their conditions will be assessed and a plan of repair/restoration will be prepared for consideration along with an evaluation of the remediation costs which will be submitted to MVCA members at the March 2015 community meeting. Please contact a member of the board if there is a wall that you believe requires maintenance.

Jeff Todd Way opened to traffic last month to welcoming commuters. At long last the MVCA community now has a direct link to Telegraph Road. The roadway improvements also include a multipurpose path available to pedestrians and cyclists which links MVCA to a statewide cycling system located along Telegraph Road. Some of the project's improvements are still under construction but will be completed in November.

With school back in session please be mindful of children making their way through our neighborhoods and be sure to stop for school busses loading and unloading passengers. Please support our schools by attending some of the many sporting activities championed by the many local youth athletic clubs and high school athletic programs.

MVCA

Membership Meeting

Wednesday, October 8, 2014

Washington Mill Elementary

7:00 PM pizza and soda 7:30 PM program

Discussion Topic

MVCA community entrance walls and decorative lighting systems

Election Day is Tuesday, November 4. New voter identification requirements began July 1 so be certain that you have the proper form of ID available when you go to vote. Some important dates to consider include:

September 19 – In-Person absentee voting begins

October 14 – Voter registration deadline

October 28 – Deadline to apply for an absentee ballot by mail

November 1 – Final day, in-person absentee voting

November 4 – Absentee ballot return deadline

For more information about acceptable forms of identification and clarification of the above deadlines please contact the Fairfax County Office of Elections (702) 222-0776 or at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/elections/.

*Paul Schray, President
Mount Vernon Civic Association*

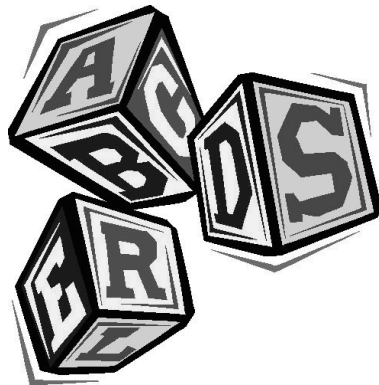
PLANNING AND ZONING

Was it a fast summer or what? The planning and zoning committee still managed to hold meetings. An update of the Residual Studio Apartments (RSU) sub-committee: the sub-committee is still working on a final draft proposal. Their most recent meeting was in May. These meetings are not open to the public. Additional information can be found at fairfaxcounty.gov/planning/rsu/htm. We are waiting for results of the meetings.

Another update was with the North Hill project. The county is still in closed door review of applications for the parcel. We will be notified once an application has been decided on.

At-Home Day Care Requests

There have been an extraordinary number of at-home daycare applications coming through the county Planning Commission. So many that, Earl Flanagan, Planning, Commissioner Mount Vernon District, is requesting HOA or CA approval along with application. The concern is the possible strain on community “tot-lots” that the at-home operation might utilize. By right, an individual may care for up to five children (in addition to their own) in their townhome or apartment and up to seven in their single family houses, with one helper. If the individual wishes to add another child and/or helper, they must apply for the “special permit”. Most recent applicants are not new businesses but existing ones trying to conform to the current zoning code. Currently, the applicant at 8467 Byers Drive (sub division of Skyview Park) is requesting a Special Exception (SE) for at-home daycare. The P&Z Chair is waiting for HOA comments prior to our review.



Noise Ordinance Progress

A third update concerned the proposed noise ordinance amendment/group assembly in residential areas: we are waiting for the results from the county. The staff gathered public comments gathered from public meetings with a May 30 deadline and briefed the June meeting of the Board of Supervisors. More information from both proposals can be found at fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/zoning/groupassembly/ and fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/zoning/noiseordinance/

An update on the 3-2-1 policy: Marianne Gardner, Dpt of Planning and Zoning, reported that the Board of Supervisors directed the staff to collect more information from Tysons Corner before proceeding. Since the data needed on the nonresidential contribution to affordable housing will be triggered by reaching certain points in the construction of units it will some time, possible years before enough data is collected.

Community Revitalization

Liz Hagg, Deputy Director, and Hyung Garland, Revitalization Program Manager for the Office of Community Revitalization (OCR) briefed us on any matter concerning revitalization with special emphasis on the seven county designated revitalization areas. Richmond Highway Corridor is one of the seven. Of the seven areas, ours is the only one that has a county funded staff, Southeast Fairfax Development Corporation, to assist in promoting redevelopment and revitalization along Richmond Highway. The briefing is on the MVCCA Planning and Zoning web page under the July meeting tab. More information about OCR is at fcrevit.org. One particular area discussed was the Woodlawn Community Business Center (CBC). The request is to add a “residential options” to sub-units A-1, A-2, and A-3 and parcels 1 and 3 in the suburban Neighborhood Area. There is current interest to revitalize and redevelop this area, except for sub-unit A-1. The problem is that the current Comprehensive Plan language does not allow for “residential options”. Currently there are no proposals for this area. The intent of the resolution we submitted is to develop interest to redevelop this area. To date,

MEMBERSHIP AND DIRECTORY

Supervisor Hyland has requested staff to look at this resolution (Out of Turn Plan Amendment for Woodlawn CBC. In the coming weeks, staff, potential developers, landowners and stakeholders and the P&Z Chair to meet to discuss a formula for how much residential development would work in this area.

Wood Haven Road Special Exception Request

The owner(s) of the property at 6430 Wood Haven Road in New Alexandria is seeking a 'special exception' to permit 570 cubic yards of fill in a flood plain. The ultimate goal is to build a house (single family detached) on the property. The property is in a floodplain and part in Resource Protection Area (RPA). The opposition – president New Alexandria association and a resident pointed out that any additional impervious surfaces would only make the flooding worsen. The E&R committee developed a resolution to oppose the project. The P&Z voted to support the E&R's resolution to oppose the request.

Verizon Property Special Exception

The Verizon of the Verizon Switching Station at 2806 Popkins lane is asking for Special Exception to reduce the land area for the switching station from 5.6 to 1.3 acres. They would like to subdivide and sell approximately 4.2 acres of the surplus property to accommodate 3-4 dwelling units per acre. There is no opposition from surrounding communities. They will improve the area they maintain. They will add a sidewalk, curb, and gutter to the frontage of the property as well as additional landscaping that includes a new bio-retention filter which will improve on-site storm water management. The committee voted to support the sale of the 'excess' property.

The Huntington Club gave a power point presentation on their request to redevelop. The RFP (request for proposal) can be viewed at sfdc.org.

*Karan Cerutti
Planning and Zoning Chair*

Our 8th Annual MVCA picnic held on May 17th was a great success; it was held on the grounds of St. James Episcopal Church. The weather was great and we had 215 neighbors come out and listen to the music of Johnny Artis while enjoying barbecued burgers, brats and hot dogs. Our picnic is an annual event for all our MVCA area neighbors and we look forward to seeing you in 2015!

And thanks to one of our neighbors, Ron Leffler, you can see the pictures from this (and all prior annual picnics) on our website. Thanks to Ron for updating prior newsletters, association information and picnic pictures on www.mountvernoncivicassociation.org

We hope you had a great summer. We rarely get new membership applications but we have super block captains who contact us for directories to share with new neighbors. If you are leaving the MVCA, don't forget to let us know you are moving. And, if you know a new family is moving in, please let us know so that we may offer directories and update our membership. This is a shout-out to all our wonderful block captains for keeping in contact with us. Thank you very much.

In 2008, Kristin Mattheis "retired" as the MVCA membership director. It was a huge job. John Skudlarek, then president, asked us to take over and we cut the job in half: Elizabeth taking on the data entry and Ken selling advertising for the newsletter and directory. Sadly, Elizabeth is leaving the job before the new year. WANTED: new MVCA partner for Ken! The tasks are to enter data from membership forms and block captains and organize data for the bi-annual membership directory. Elizabeth is happy to train the next volunteer so please let us know of your interest.

We look forward to seeing you at the next membership meeting and we can answer all questions you may have. If you are new to the area, we'd love to meet you.

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*Elizabeth Bancroft
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BUDGET AND FINANCE

Here are a few quick highlights for the Fairfax County (FC) budget.

Fairfax County Full Year 2014 Carryover

On September 9, 2014, Fairfax County adopted the 2014 Carryover budget. The FC full year books close in June and, by law, FC must operate with a balanced budget. This positive balance is the “carryover” into the 2015 budget and amounts to a non-recurring balance of \$11.22 million.

Most of this extra money is to be reserved to address the short fall in full year 2015 and 2016 budgets. Some of the money will go towards funding the full day Monday change to the Fairfax County elementary schools. However, it was noted that the FCPS had a carryover amount greater than the County and these amounts are under review.

County-School Board Budget Meeting

It was noted by County Executive Long that the local economic recovery has been sluggish. This is causing budget problems with the increasing needs in FCPS and County service programs. “As such, the limited revenue growth outlook and pared down budget baseline will challenge our ability to maintain the status quo in service delivery as well as our capacity to confront emerging needs, issues and opportunities.”

CE Long is advising that limited economic growth in the years ahead and the current “revenue mix will not provide the resources needed to address all our spending requirements.” It sounds like there will be an increased push to raise taxes to meet the FCPS growth and county program needs in the face of slow growing county revenues. County revenues are already running under the 2015 projections.

Additionally, CE Long continues to try and strengthen our reserves. This appears to be in reaction to the Moody’s negative watch outlook, sluggish local economy effecting future budgets and projected budget deficits and State Budget issues.

State Budget Deficits

The FC Board of Supervisors is concerned about the State budget deficits and the impact on funding programs and salaries at the County

level. It will be very difficult to keep the status quo with the level of program services without the County financial input. This is particularly a problem in the Office of the Public Defender for Fairfax County. These are state employees with salaries set by the Commonwealth.

I look forward to our next meeting. The Fairfax county department of management and budget website is at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dmb/.

Sean McCarthy
Budget and Finance Chair

BUSINESS HELPING MOUNT VERNON

The Neighborhood Friends of Mount Vernon Steering Committee is pleased to announce an exciting new Business Sponsorship Program at Mount Vernon. The package offers area business executives the opportunity to become more involved with George Washington’s Mount Vernon and make a lasting impact on the community. Sponsors will gain complimentary access to popular events and programs on the Estate, while supporting an important piece of our country’s historic preservation. These benefits can be used by individual owners or shared with employees and business associates.

Support of this annual program will go to the 2014-2015 Neighborhood Friends sponsored project, Phase II Restoration of the East Lawn Slope. A powerful storm in August of 2014 greatly compromised the mid-section of the slope which had not been restored in Phase I of the slope remediation. A 20 foot wide slide of the ground resulted from this 500-year rainfall. Restoration of this slide is critical to the Mansion’s stability and an imminent project that the Estate must undertake.

For more information on how to become a sponsor please contact Tammy Eddy, Mount Vernon’s Membership Manager at (703)799-5075 or teddy@mountvernon.org.

EDUCATION AND SCHOOLS

Influx of Immigrant Students

Our local school board member, Dan Stork, met with the MVCCA education committee in late August. He was asked about how FCPS schools will be impacted by the large influx of unaccompanied minors coming across our southern border. He was very candid in saying there was really no way of knowing how many of these children would end up in FCPS schools until the school year started but said that there had been an unofficial estimate of 250 students. Right as the school year began he sent out an email saying that FCPS is in the process of getting a better number now that the school year has begun. We haven't seen a revised number yet but I appreciate Mr. Stork's transparency on this issue.

School Accreditation

One hundred and seventy one—or 89 percent—of the 192 schools FCPS have earned full accreditation for 2014-15 based on student achievement data from 2013-14. For a school to earn full accreditation, at least 75 percent of students must pass reading and writing SOL tests, and at least 70 percent must pass state assessments in mathematics, science, and history. High schools must also meet a benchmark for graduation and completion.

Our three local schools — Mount Vernon HS, Whitman MS and Washington Mill ES — are all “Accredited with Warning.” A school receives this rating if pass rates are below the achievement levels required for full accreditation. Schools that are Accredited with Warning undergo academic reviews and are required to adopt and implement school improvement plans.

Full Day Mondays for Elementary Schools

For this school year all FCPS Elementary Schools will have full day Monday classes. The Superintendent's staff has worked on this issue with a goal of a quick, effective implementation. I think they've achieved that goal developing a plan that will meet the needs of students, families and staff that builds in consistent

holidays, such as a full two weeks for winter break, and strategic planning days throughout the year. This should also eliminate the need to make up lost weather days at the end of the school year.



Revised School Start Times

There have been many national studies relating to school start times, adequate sleep and student performance. FCPS has been studying the issue, trying to balance cost and student performance. On Sept 18th, following several studies and review of a variety of options, Dr. Garza made her recommendation

This option has the elementary schools starting at the same time or within ten minutes of their current start time. All middle schools will begin at 7:30 a.m. and high schools will begin between 8 and 8:10 a.m.

The cost for changing the start times is \$5.4 million dollars, primarily to purchase new buses.

FCPS is still studying ways to move the middle school start times to a later time. The plan won't take effect until the 2015-16 school year at the earliest.

Bruce Kitchen
Education Chair

PUBLIC SAFETY

Information on the driving safety training program for teens (at right) was provided by Master Police Officer (MPO) Robert Urps, the new Community Police Officer at the Mt. Vernon Police Station. He succeeds MPO Greg Kottemann who has retired from the FCPD and was honored at several community events. MPO Urps welcomes communications and queries on police matters (Robert.Urps@fairfaxcounty.gov).

There have been two recent daylight burglaries of residences in the MVCA area. In both cases, there was a forced entry through the rear of the home, and no one was at home.

Other concerns include:

- Need for attention to safety of pedestrians, bicyclists, joggers, etc as daylight periods diminish particularly after fall change from Daylight Saving Time- consider reflectors, flashlights, etc
- Need for caution near school buses and bus stops
- Safety during Halloween events particularly those occurring after dark
- Keep entry and garage doors locked; consider various types including motion-sensitive of outdoor lighting
- Install new batteries in smoke detectors; consider adding a smoke detector in attic
- Inspect fire extinguishers to ensure they are charged (needle/arrow in the green zone)
- Have chimneys, flues and fireplaces inspected
- Watch for children playing in leaf piles in the street

Consider joining Neighborhood Watch, taking the Citizens Police Academy training and/or the CERT emergency training.

Report immediately to Animal Control Emergency 911 animals that may be rabid.

Have a great and safe autumn.

*Your Neighbor
John Hurley, Public Safety Chair*

YOUNG DRIVER SAFETY COURSE

Is someone you love learning to drive? The Fairfax County Police Department has recognized the need for advanced driving skills for our youthful driver population. Teenage drivers are at a higher risk than any other age group of being involved in fatal crashes. Inexperience, peer pressure, and the increased risks that our younger drivers take is a recipe for disaster. In an effort to reach out to this very specific population group, (teens aged 16-18) we have undertaken a partnership with the community to address this issue. The FCPD's **Youthful Driver Program** is a one-day, hands-on course developed to provide advanced driver training techniques to these younger drivers. The course is held one Saturday a month.

Subjects that will be covered are:

- Basic Vehicle Dynamics
- Skid Recovery Techniques
- Proper Seating Positions (forward & reverse)
- Crash Avoidance
- Proper Steering Techniques (forward & reverse)
- Controlling Weight Transfers
- Anti-Lock & Threshold Braking Techniques
- Off Road Recovery Techniques


These techniques are some of the same skills taught to FCPD's officers. The instructors are law enforcement officers who teach driver training skills to their peers. Fairfax County's Emergency Vehicle Operations Course and Instructors are ranked among the best in the nation.

Training takes place on Saturdays from 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m at the Fairfax County Criminal Justice Academy's Emergency Vehicle Operations Center at 3725 Stonecroft Blvd in Chantilly. It is a secured facility where students will drive front wheel drive Chevrolet Malibus and Ford Taurus.

The cost is \$200. Financial accommodations may be made for qualifying students. To sign up, send an e-mail to FCPDYouthfulDrivingProgram@fairfaxcounty.gov or contact MPO Michelle Humphries: michelle.humphries@fairfaxcounty.gov.



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More Local News

Check out the revised MVCA website for more local news.

Photos from the MVCA picnic:
<http://mountvernoncivicassociation.org/gallery.html>

From Rick Gamble, a great list of Mount Vernon related reading:
<http://mountvernoncivicassociation.org/suggestedreading.html>

Call 911
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Happenings in Mount Vernon

Crime Solvers Community Shred Event

Saturday, October 4, 2014, 9AM - noon
Mount Vernon District Police Station
2511 Parkers Lane, Alexandria

MVCA General Membership Meetings

Wednesday, October 8, 2014
Washington Mill Elementary School
7:00 PM pizza, 7:30 PM meeting

Wednesday, January 14, 2015
Washington Mill Elementary School
7:00 PM pizza, 7:30 PM meeting

Neighborhood Speeding Survey

Report speeding trends in your neighborhood.
Ongoing. Online at <http://svy.mk/1oef9WO>

Mount Vernon Civic Association, Inc.

Officers

President: Paul Schray(703) 619-9377
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Treasurer: Tom Cleary(703) 360-3903

Directors

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John Skudlarek(703) 704-5213

Committee Chairs

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Consumer Affairs: Cindy Brown(703) 348-7175
Education: Bruce Kitchen.....(703) 799-6473
Environment & Recreation: Vacant
Health & Human Services: Jim Brown(703) 348-7175
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
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