



Mount Vernon Civic Association, Inc.

Spring 2014

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

Wednesday,
March 12, 2014

Speaker:

Pamela Hess,
Directory of Arcadia Farm at
Woodlawn Estate

Where and When:

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



Mark your calendar!

*The Eighth Annual
Mount Vernon
Civic Association
Community Picnic
is scheduled for*

May 17, 2014

*Enjoy food, drinks, music, and
a chance to meet your
neighbors from our great
Mount Vernon community.*

*St. James Episcopal Church
1 - 5 PM.*

President's Message

I hope all are doing their best to survive the snowy and icy winter conditions – spring is right around the corner. Thank you to all who have kept sidewalks clear of snow and ice and for storing vehicles off the roadways during plowing operations. VDOT has been very responsive to keeping our community roads clear during the many storms we have encountered and we thank them for their efforts.

The next MVCA general membership meeting has been scheduled for Wednesday, March 12 at Washington Mill Elementary School. Our guest speaker for the evening will be Pamela Hess the Director of Arcadia Farm at Woodlawn Estate to share with us their future plans for the use of the horse pasture land and stable areas soon to be impacted by the Route 1 widening project. Ms. Hess was scheduled to join us at our meeting in January but had to cancel due to weather conditions. Please join us at 7:30pm for the start of the meeting or stop by at 7:00pm for pizza and beverages.

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.

Planning for the next MVCA Community Picnic scheduled for May 17 continues. If you would like to help with the planning of this event please contact Ken Poortinga or me. Ken will be providing updates regarding the picnic at the meeting.

As always I invite all to spend some of your time reviewing this newsletter as it contains important information occurring within our community that will be of interest to you. Please do not hesitate to contact me, our directors or committee chairs if we can be of assistance to you.

*Paul Schray, President
Mount Vernon Civic Association*

Planning and Zoning

Spring is coming, REALLY, so just hold on. Until it actually arrives, read about the issues discussed at the P&Z committee.

Lorton Landfill Plans

One of the biggest is the extension of the Lorton Landfill beyond the 2018 closing date and the subsequent construction of Green Energy Park, a reusable energy park, by ESI, Inc, under their Special Exception Amendment (SEA) 2, if approved. It would have four modes of reusable energy: wind turbines, geothermal exchange, solar panels, and methane gas exchange. Because of its wide impact, the three committees of P&Z, E&R, and Transportation Committees held a joint meeting Feb 19 to discuss the project and develop and pass a Resolution. As a group, the resolution to oppose this effort and to hold Furnace Associates, Inc. to its first SEA was supported. The specific resolution is on the P&Z page of the MVCCA website. Also on the P&Z page are the numerous petitions/letters of support and opposition.

Secondly, under the Laurel Hill Adaptive Reuse (Lorton penitentiary) project, the developer, Alexander Company, Inc., for the retail side of the project briefed us on their plan for the 110,000 SF (max). One of the challenges they face is how to handle the wall surrounding the property.

Historic standards require the wall to stay as is and so will block visibility of any/all retail in the area. They're on their third review and are hopeful this one will qualify. The range of retail they are looking for is: high end grocers, clothing store(s), coffee shop(s), and real estate office(s). The specific space detail is: penitentiary area: office/retail/residential, dining hall: office/retail, and northern penitentiary yard: new retail construction. There is a gap of \$10-15M for the project so the Alexander Co is applying for both state and federal historic tax credits to help close the gap.

Affordable Housing

Another subject briefed was the Review of the Countywide Policy for Affordable Housing Contributions by Non-Residential Developments, AKA 3-2-1 policy. Long title isn't it? The longer explanation (titled AH Contributions Policy.pdf) is outlined on the P&Z page of MVCCA website. Basically, the contribution is tiered: \$3/nonresidential SF in the Tyson's Corner Urban Center and also within a ¼ of any other Transit Station area, \$2/nonresidential SF between a ¼ to ½ mile of any Transit Station Area; and \$1/nonresidential SF outside a ½ mile radius of any Transit Station Area to the edge of the Transit Station Area, and in all other Suburban Centers and Community Business Centers of the County. Unsure of the direct impact on revitalization on Richmond Highway. A George Mason University Center for Regional Analysis workforce housing study, commissioned by Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority (FCRHA) found that FC needs to plan for availability of affordable housing for full spectrum of the economy.



Tim Sergeant, Residential Studio Unit (RSU) subcommittee chair, briefed us on the most recent proposal update. They are still working the issue but the most recent proposal is on the P&Z web page. Essentially, it would not allow RSUs in residential areas of R-12 and below and Planned Development Housing (PDH) -12 and below. MV area is still subjected to have RSUs in the area. But the proposal is still being worked.

Lastly, Geosyntec briefed us on the structure of the berm that would have surrounded the landfill under SEA-2 (from the first paragraph)

Karan Cerutti
Planning and Zoning Committee Chair

Budget and Finance

The 2015 Fairfax County, full year advertised budget plan was released on February 25. Here are the highlights.

The advertised budget maintains our tax rate at \$1.085; however, the official advertised tax rate will not be released until March 4. The budget has a projected positive balance of \$10.64 million in FY 2015 and \$13.73 million in 2016. County Executive (CE) Long has adopted a multi-year approach in developing our budgets.

Modest revenue growth is projected, based primarily on the residential housing market projections. Mean assessed home values have increased, so expect an increase in your real estate tax. The average increase is projected at \$331.67.

The County would like to try to broaden our revenue through diversifying its tax collection base. The County would like to increase the commercial/industrial percentage of total real estate assessment base. For full year 2015, its projected at 19.01%. In 1990, it was 26.76%. The County's office vacancy rate is 14.9%, the highest on record since 1991. The office vacancy rate is blamed on the reaction to the defense department budget cuts and restructuring. FC is making efforts to diversify our commercial/industrial away from its direct reliance on the federal government.

Additionally, the argument for a meals tax to further broaden our revenue source would place some of our tax collection on visitors coming from outside the County. It is also my understanding that the meals tax revenue does not factor into the calculations of how much of our state sales tax money we receive back from Richmond.

On the spending side, the Fairfax County School (FCPS) system continues to expand as the schools seem to do more with less. FCPS asked for a 5.7% increase in the transfer, but the County has budgeted for a 2.07% increase. Student enrollments continue to increase. Yet, FCPS is eliminating over 700 positions, increasing class

sizes and making reductions to non-school based funding.

Additional increases in County spending include pay and benefits for County employees by \$29.54 million, capital construction and debt service by \$29.93 million, public safety by \$14.23 million, cost of County operations by \$12.23 million and human services by \$8.50 million. The details of each of these areas can be found online.

In our meeting with CE Long, he was upbeat about our current fiscal environment. The federal budget negotiations have eased pressure on our local economy and the US economy appears to be on the upswing. Also, the State transportation funding package was approved in Richmond, so FC should see a significant increase in money for transportation infrastructure.

For those of you that have made it this far in the reading, fun fact, FC will host the World Police and Fire Games in the summer of 2015.

Supposedly, this is one of the largest global events and is even larger than the Winter Olympics. I'm not sure if they are measuring by attendance or participants, but it sounds like a great time and a good source of revenue for FC.

CE Long also discussed the Moody's FC bond downgrade to negative outlook. CE Long noted the Moody's downgrade was due to not enough reserves, underfunded pensions and the use of one time sources of money for recurring expenses. These are being addressed moving forward, but CE Long disagreed with the reserve requirements.

Important dates to remember, March 4th advertisement of FY 2015 tax rates, April 8th-10 public hearings on FY 2015 budget, April 22nd budget mark-up and April 29th, budget adoption. As always, please feel free to email me at mclucid@verizon.net. The 2015 budget documents can be found online at fairfaxcounty.gov/dmb/.

Sean McCarthy, Budget and Finance Chair

Your Civic Association Membership

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, 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. We have free pizza and soda before meetings.

We are in need of volunteer Block Captains for Brookmay Court, Ferry Harbour Court, Ferry Landing Court, Nellie Custis Court, Old Mill Road, 9300-9418 and 9323-99423 Old Mt Vernon Road, Riverwood Court, Riverwood Road,

4600-4626 Tarpon Lane, and 9114-9124 Volunteer Drive. Block Captains act as our representatives by letting us know when neighbors move out and new neighbors move in. Can you help us?

Big thank yous to our block captains for their help. We'd like to acknowledge our neighbors Mike Habib, Marilyn Comer and Jim Gillman for their help over the years. We are grateful for all your support.

We are planning our 8th Annual MVCA Community Picnic with food, drinks, music and a chance to meet your neighbors from our great Mount Vernon community. The picnic is planned for May 17 and will be held at St. James Episcopal Church from 1-5 PM. If you are interested in volunteering to help with the picnic, please contact Ken Poortinga at 703-360-7740 or ken8487@verizon.net.

Thank you for your support.

*Ken Poortinga 703-360-7740
Elizabeth Bancroft 703-360-4206*

Consumer Affairs

There has been discussion for some time now to expand the Farmer's Market options for the Mount Vernon area beyond the currently operating location at Sherwood Hall Library parking lot. Front runner for consideration had been the Belle View Shopping Center — good location and far enough from Sherwood Hall that it would present fresh produce shopping at a different venue serving others within the Mount Vernon community. Unfortunately, the owners of the BV Shopping Center voted not to move ahead with the idea, so discussion for other venues has now been reopened. Fifteen possible alternatives were discussed and those narrowed to the five most likely locations. More to follow.

Under consideration at present: Re-laning of the two-lane road in the Sherwood Hall area to

make it a 4-lane road and completely eliminating any roadside parking. Would severely impact SH residents and the businesses and churches in the region. Information meeting to be held at Mt Vernon Government Center, March 12, 6:30pm. We have no problem with proposed re-striping of lanes, but do want a dedicated left turn lane for traffic.

The county would like to establish a Transit Center in the vicinity of either the former Home Goods store in Hybla Valley or the South City Government Center OR the corner of Richmond Hwy and Lockheed where the Shell station is.

*Cindy Brown
MVCA Consumer Affairs Chair*

Mount Vernon Civic Association 2014 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, directory, and our community picnic. Our 8th Annual MVCA Neighborhood Picnic is scheduled this year on May 17th.

Thank you for your support!

Yes, my check is enclosed.

Name:

Title (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Military rank)

Last name

First name

Name:

Title (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Military rank)

Last name

First name

Address:

Phone:

Unlisted

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.

Volunteer Opportunities

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
- Membership & Directory
- Neighborhood Watch
- Newsletter
- 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.

Education

The Fairfax County School Board has adopted the FY 2015 Advertised Budget of \$2.5 billion, a net increase of 2.4 percent, or \$59.4 million, from the FY 2014 Approved Budget.

One of the big drivers of the budget is enrollment and demographics changes within the county. FCPS enrollment has grown by 15,603 students since FY 2010. Looking more closely at the enrollment increase is interesting. The General education enrollment (non ESOL or special Ed) has grown 8.8% since 2010 but the ESOL enrollment has grown by 51.3% since 2010 and now accounts for 14.4% of all students. The special education enrollment has increased by 6.4% since 2010.

These enrollment changes are important from a budgetary perspective since the average cost per General Education student is projected to be \$11,359 while ESOL students incur an additional cost of \$ 3,481 per ESOL student. The average cost per pupil for the special education program is \$22,720.

We rely heavily on local funds for our school system. In Fairfax County we receive a much smaller proportion of our education funding from the state than other localities. Fairfax County receives 21.7% of its funding from the state while other school systems on average receive 43.7% of their funding from the state. The state funding level is calculated using the Local Composite Index (LCI). The LCI is calculated through a complicated formula that attempts to determine which school systems can afford to pay more of their own basic education, and which systems cannot afford to pay.

In order to balance the school budget the budget cuts over 700 positions, requires families to pay for AB and IB exams, increases classroom size, and cuts to summer school programs.

More details on the budget can be found at <http://www.fcps.edu/fs/budget/budgetdocuments.shtml>

Bruce Kitchen
MVCA Education Chairman

Stay Safe!

Do NOT pass school buses in any direction if red lights are flashing. ❖ Be careful regarding soot, blockages, bird nests, etc in your chimney or fireplace and use extreme caution when disposing of ash. ❖ Check the batteries in your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors. ❖ Call 911 for immediate response by Police, Fire, Rescue/EMS Ambulance. For police-type matters give a clear description of the vehicle (if any), direction of travel, etc. ❖ LOCK your cars. ❖ Do not leave your car with the motor running at stores or places of business. ❖ Keep your garage doors locked. ❖ Call Dominion Electric (former VEPCO) to report overhead street light outages. ❖ Report IMMEDIATELY and STAY AWAY from downed lines of any type. ❖ Hats off to Colin Owens and our Neighborhood Watch!

Your Neighbor, John A. Hurley



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Mount Vernon Estate

New Benefit for Members

Mount Vernon Estate has a new, exclusive benefit for members. With the opening of the Fred W. Smith National Library for the Study of George Washington at Mount Vernon, the Estate will be offering a series of “Lunch and Fellowship” lectures at the library. These intimate lunch lectures with Mount Vernon’s library fellows-in-residence are offered exclusively to Mount Vernon members at a minimal fee.

The next lecture will be offered on Wednesday, April 30 with Edward Larson, Ph.D. The lecture and discussion will revolve around “George Washington’s Role in Shaping the Constitution.”

Dr. Larson is a University Professor of history and holds the Hugh & Hazel Darling Chair in Law at Pepperdine University. He is the author of nine books and nearly 100 published articles. He teaches, lectures, and writes about issues of

law, politics, science and medicine from a historical perspective. He received the 1998 Pulitzer Prize for History.

Join the Neighborhood Friends of Mount Vernon to receive access to these insightful and informative fellowship luncheons and for many more benefits, including: complimentary admissions to the Estate, discounts at the Mount Vernon Inn and the Shops at Mount Vernon, complimentary invitations to the Neighborhood Friends Family Night Picnic, and member-only presales for the popular Mount Vernon Wine Festivals. The member-only presale for the Spring Wine Festival is March 24 – 28, so act fast to receive these exciting and timely benefits.

Visit <http://www.mountvernon.org/membership> for more information.

67th Annual Birthnight Supper and Ball Raises Record Funds

Thank you to the Neighborhood Friends who attended the 67th Annual Birthnight Supper and Ball. The event was a great success due to the many generous neighbors and supporters who came out to support this important fundraiser. All proceeds from the event go to the Neighborhood Friends of Mount Vernon 2013-2014 sponsored project, the restoration of the Mansion Staircases. Mount Vernon’s beautiful grand staircase in the central passage is showing the effects of more than a million visitors climbing these iconic stairs each year and it needs to be restored. Similar restoration is needed on the other two primary staircases in the Mansion.

Nearly 200 guests attended the event and preliminary numbers show that the evening’s total net proceeds will be over \$70,000 making this the most successful Ball ever. Thank you to the individuals and businesses in the community who helped make this event so successful.

*Tammy Eddy, Mount Vernon Membership Manager
teddy@mountvernon.org, (703)799-5075*

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Mount Vernon Civic Association, Inc.

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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
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