



Mount Vernon Civic Association, Inc.

Spring 2016

www.MountVernonCivicAssociation.org

Belle Rive • Ferry Landing Estates • Ferry Landing Villa • Ferry Point Estates • Mount Vernon Forest • Mount Vernon Grove • Mount Vernon Park • Oxford • Riverbend • Riverwood • Vernon Square • Washington Woods • Westgate • Wycliffe on the Potomac • Yacht Haven Estates

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The MVCA Board cordially invites you to our next board general membership meeting on Wednesday, March 9 in the Washington Mill Elementary School library. As is tradition, we will serve pizza and beverages beginning at 7:00 PM. Our meeting will begin at 7:30 PM.

This will be the first meeting since our elections in January, and I, along with the other recently elected Board members, are excited to begin serving in our new roles. I have confidence that we will continue the great work of those who have served before us; I hope that I will be able to live up to Paul Schray's example! Our board has begun working together to keep the positive momentum in our community, while also thinking of new ways to increase active membership within our association. One way you can become more active is to volunteer for one of the open committee chair positions listed on the newsletter's cover. I can attest to how these positions tune you into the larger Mount Vernon community happenings.

In the mean time, please keep an eye out for our annual membership application. An added feature will be the ability to pay dues online through PayPal. The application will not only be your way to join or maintain membership, but will also include a survey to help us better understand how our community feels about trash removal in our local area. This comes after a member

MVCA

Membership Meeting

Wednesday, March 9 2016

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

Speaker

Vanessa Wheeler of Holly, Woods, and Vines will be sharing tips for getting our yards back into shape this spring.



brought the question of trash removal to the general membership's attention and we feel the larger community should weigh in.

We are also in the initial planning stages of our annual community picnic. You'll be seeing more on that as May draws closer.

Thank you for the opportunity to represent our fine community. We are fortunate to call this small corner of General Washington's farm our home.

Louise Sloan
MVCA President

BUDGET AND FINANCE

The 2017 Fairfax County (FC) budget discussions are under way and the 2017 FC, full year, advertised budget plan was released on February 16. Here are the highlights.

The advertised budget raises our tax rate .04 cents to 1.13; however, the official advertised tax rate will not be released until March 1st by the Board of Supervisors. This .04 cent raise does not include the full funding amount as requested by the Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) budget. This would amount to an additional .03 cent increase to fully fund their requested budget. The value of a penny in the 2017 real estate tax rate is \$23.3 million for FC.

We had another lively discussion with Supervisor Dan Stork and County Executive Long's staff at our MVCCA annual budget review. We all have many concerns regarding the revenue side of the budget.

The biggest concern raised was the continued shortfall in state education spending. State funding per student, adjusted for inflation, has decreased from \$4,275 to \$3,655 since 2009. Virginia is in the top 10 states in per capita income per household, but in the bottom 10 for public education funding. When we combine this statistic with the apparent unfair LCI calculation, FC is significantly behind in available funding for our FCPS.

We also requested that the County address the costs associated with Fort Belvoir students living on base, but attending FCPS. Supervisor Stork believed we had at least 2,500 students from Fort Belvoir in our school system. At approximately \$13,000 per student, when adjusted for the \$600.00 county supplement, this amounts to a \$32,500,000 cost to FC.

This seems unfair to both our service members and to the FC taxpayers. If this is true, then the federal government needs to reimburse the FC tax payer. If however, the local economic benefits from the base generate more than enough income to cover this cost or there are other factors to consider, this needs to be explained. At the very least, we need more information and clarity on this matter.

We discussed that commercial office vacancy rates are at record highs going as far back as the early 1990's. There appear to be a number of reasons for this, including a still sluggish local economy and the silver line expansion.

However, I again expressed my concerns that we should have a better understanding about why this is taking place. Is this a temporary downturn or is this due to factors like telecommuting or firms downsizing? Could this be changing the long term landscape of our commercial market? Did we over build due to the Fort Belvoir expansion and this excess capacity needs to clear the market?

On the expense side of the budget, the presentation online covers many of these categories including the new South County police station and county employee compensation. After many years of budget cutting and deferring expenses, we did not spend much time on this area of the budget. The explanations given seemed appropriate.

I do believe that CE Long's budget provided more detail than in years past. However, we still need more discussion on state and federal revenue sources.

We also have potential changes in proffers taking place in the Virginia legislature. No

estimates were given as to the potential impact on FC revenues. It was advised that not all proffers were monetary, so it is difficult to measure the impact.

I continue to bang the drum for better communication and transparency. It's hard for a FC voter to agree to a recommended tax increases when we all seem to agree that we are not getting our fair share of tax dollars already paid into the system. We need a plan.

Before asking the tax payers for more money, we deserve a detailed analysis of the fairness of the LCI formula, the estimated amount we are losing, and our legal courses of action.

On a positive note, Moody's removed our negative watch bond rating in response to FC raising its reserve requirements.

The details of the CE Long's budget presentation can be found at Fairfaxcounty.gov.

Important dates to remember, March 1st the advertisement of FY 2016 tax rate is announced and public hearings are April 5th, 6th and 7th. As always, please feel free to email me at mclucid@verizon.net. The 2017 budget documents can be found online at fairfaxcounty.gov/dmb/.

Sean McCarthy, Budget and Finance Chair

ENVIRONMENT AND RECREATION

The MVCCA E&R Committee hosted representatives from Ft Belvoir who spoke about a proposed housing development aboard the base. This development will be near the Woodlawn Baseball fields on Pole Road and is slated to be on government lands. The housing, according to the base representatives, is needed because of ongoing renovations to base housing.

Many members of the E&R committee were disappointed with the way Ft Belvoir notified its neighbors about the proposed development. This meeting, in fact, came after the Army closed the forum for public comment. Still, base representatives gave a detailed presentation that showed where the units would be built with approximate locations of the buildings. The base has gone through watershed, tree, and historical studies to ensure that it is not harming nearby Huntley Meadows or destroying markers of historical importance. Still, E&R

members questioned whether these studies have captured the whole picture since many trees will need to be cut and just this past December land features tied to George Washington's Mount Vernon boundaries were located in the development's vicinity.

As a result of this meeting, and of those in other MVCCA committees, the MVCCA Board passed a resolution requesting further information about this proposed development. You can read the resolution in full at www.mvcca.org.

My time as the E&R Committee chair is coming to an end, though I have enjoyed it thoroughly. Terry Enright will take over for me and I've no doubt that he'll represent our interests faithfully.

Louise Sloan

PLANNING AND ZONING

At a joint P&Z and Transportation meeting, we discussed Embark, the widening of Route 1 from 235 to Napper, at length. A recent meeting was held at the South County Government Building on 18 Feb 16.

Previously, meetings to discuss funding and various projects (Bus Rapid Transit, Metro line extension) were held at the last minute, causing non-County attendees scheduling conflicts. The meetings will now be held the fourth Monday monthly. Currently, it's a four-year process due to Environmental Impact study and required changes/modifications to the Comprehensive Plan. Chair, P&Z Committee, believes it can be cut in half.

The Morning Star Daycare, proposed at 8628 Woodlawn Court, application has been delayed until April P&Z meeting.

There was much discussion about the upcoming Fort Belvoir housing development north of Pole Road and south of southern portion of Huntley Meadows Park. A Fort Belvoir contractor briefed the E&R committee (plus interested parties) on Wednesday, 3 Feb 16 at the South County Government Building. Dan Storck is scheduled (I don't know when it's scheduled) to talk to the Belvoir Commander about the issue. The housing development replaces a current housing development. Some attendees were unhappy about the County's lack of involvement in its planning stage and its potential impact on Huntley Meadows Park. Stay tuned. We will hear more about this project.

The P&Z committee received another info briefing concerning the potential storage facility on the Brookside Motel property. This presentation added environmental

improvements, including storm water management, clearing out the stream, additional vegetation and a bike path, optional green roof, and a possible dedication of a portion of the property to the Fairfax County Park Authority. Required changes to the Comprehensive Plan and rezoning will be done concurrently. The Committee supported the concept.

Two bills at state legislation, HB770 and SB549, would remove cash proffers, and the ability for localities to impose or require limitations on or requirements on building materials, finishes, and methods of construction or design features on any new residential development. The P&Z committee voted (and E&R supported) writing a letter of concern regarding the impacts of these bills. The vote was 9-3.

The P&Z Chair wants to review a list of goals and objectives for us. One suggestion was to have two members monitor all proffers.

*Karan Cerutti
Planning and Zoning Chair*

Annual Membership Dues

Your annual membership letter will be mailed soon, which will ask you to support the MVCA with your annual dues. The MVCA helps the community for a very low cost. And now, an online payment option via Paypal for dues will soon be available.

ELECTION OFFICERS NEEDED

The Office of Elections is currently recruiting voters to serve as Election Officers a few days a year, including the upcoming 2016 elections. Election Officers are needed at each of the 242 precincts in Fairfax County to run the polls and assist the voters.

In order to be an Election Officer, you must:

- Be fluent in English
- Be a registered voter in the Commonwealth of Virginia
- Be able to fulfill the Federal I-9 employment eligibility requirements
- Attend a 3-hour training class
- Arrive at the polling place at 5:00 am and remain until all work has been completed after the polls close at 7pm
- Have basic computer skills

The Election Officer's main priority is to ensure the accuracy and integrity of the election process. A typical Election Day consists of:

- Arriving one hour before polls open to set up voting equipment
- Hanging up pertinent signage
- Preparing the polling room for voting
- Processing voters throughout the day
- Assisting with operating voting equipment

- Securing voting equipment and closing down the polling place at the end of the day.

Election Officers are offered a stipend of \$175 for serving a full day. We especially encourage bilingual citizens to serve as we need language assistance in many precincts. Residency in Fairfax County is not required.

It is a wonderful opportunity for those interested in the election process or public service, and we need civic-minded individuals to help make Election Day a success!

To apply or for more information, call the office at (703) 324-4735, email the office at elect@fairfaxcounty.gov, or visit the Office of Elections website at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/elections/working.htm.



PUBLIC SAFETY

Spring is near!

- Remember to utilize some outdoor lights activated by motion during hours of darkness.
- Parked cars and garages should be locked.
- Subscribe to free Fairfax County alert system — www.fairfaxcounty.gov/alerts — which you can tailor to your needs and interests.
- Other sources: Facebook.com/fairfaxcounty, Twitter.com/fairfaxcounty, www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency/blog.
- Email robert.urps@fairfaxcounty.gov. Master Police Officer (MPO) Robert Urps of the Mount Vernon District Police Station.
- 703-360-8400 ext 2259 maintains a mailing list of interested citizens
- Know how to utilize 911.
- Keep smoke detector and carbon monoxide detector batteries fresh.
- Check pressure gauge readings on fire extinguishers. USE EXTREME CARE lighting charcoal fires. NEVER spray or pour BBQ starter fluid if there is ANY chance of existing spark, ember or flame. Deadly explosions and fires can result. It is possible to buy BBQ charcoal that does not require starter fluid.
- Wear reflectors when walking, jogging, etc in hours of darkness.
- Be a safe driver-look out for children, school buses, STOP signs.

Have a safe , healthy and enjoyable Spring.

*Your Neighbor,
John A. Hurley
Public Safety*



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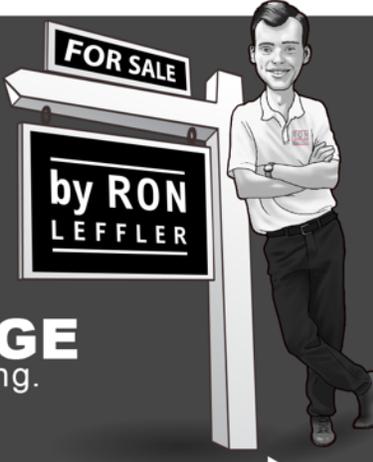
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**Mount Vernon Civic
Association Area
Happenings**

MVCA General Membership Meeting
Wednesday, March 9, 2016
Washington Mill Elementary School
7:00 PM pizza, 7:30 PM meeting

Ninth Annual MVCA picnic
Saturday, May 16, 2016
Location to be announced

Mount Vernon Civic Association, Inc.

Officers

President: Louise Sloan703-360-6038
1st Vice President: Sean McCarthy703-360-0372
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Treasurer: Jessica Mazur703-517-8468

Directors

Terry Enright 202-299-7459
Dan Rinzel703-360-4627
Paul Schray703-619-9377

Committee Chairs

Budget and Finance: Sean McCarthy703 360-0372
Consumer Affairs: Cindy Brown.....703 348-7175
Education: Vacant
Environment & Recreation: Terry Enright202-299-7459
Health & Human Services: Jim Brown703-348-7175
Membership/Directory: Ron Leffler.....703-593-4149
Neighborhood Watch: Coilin Owens703-780-5218
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