



Mount Vernon Civic Association, Inc.

Fall 2019

www.MountVernonCivicAssociation.org

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

"Life is like riding a bike. To keep your balance, you must keep moving."

– Albert Einstein

I hope everyone had a fun summer. Please join us Wednesday, October 9, 2019 in the Washington Mill Elementary School library at 7 p.m. for pizza and drinks. Our meeting will start at 7:30 p.m. We have invited our Delegate candidates for the 42nd District and School Board Representative candidates to speak at this upcoming meeting, giving us a chance to ask a few questions and get to know where they stand on issues important to our community.

Picnic and Housekeeping

I would like to extend a huge thank you to the Rayman's for organizing our Community Picnic. We had a fantastic time. Adam Roca and Chris Pegher did a wonderful job on the Cuban BBQ pig. Please thank all are volunteers who make this a premier neighborhood event. We have uploaded pictures on the website.

Our new directories were handed out at the picnic, delivered by our block captains and our local Boy Scout Troop 993. We are grateful to have a strong block captain team led by Jorie MacDonald. Please note your block captain in the neighborhood directory. If your section does not have a block captain, consider volunteering. Contact Jorie at [mvblockcaptains@gmail.com](mailto:mvbblockcaptains@gmail.com) for details. It's a fun job, and a great way to stay active and welcome new neighbors.

Monument maintenance is moving forward. We have

received over \$1,000 in donations, so thank you for your generosity. We still need a Monument committee chair to help organize this effort. Please reach out to me directly for more information.

Changing of the Guard

Our nominating committee is hard at work recruiting community members to join the ranks of the MVCA board of directors. The election is in January. Please reach out to our nominating committee chair, Jason Leaver, to volunteer. There are many roles big and small to help keep our area a great place to live.

On a Sad Note

We lost two of our long-time volunteers since we last met. Coilin Owens, a long-time member of the MVCA board and community member, Andrea Skudlarek. Many of us were lucky enough to have worked with them in various community activities over the years. Their energy and passion were infectious. They were true role models, and lived life as an example for all neighbors. I know they inspired me to take a more active role in the community—and for that, I am grateful for their leadership. Please thank their families for allowing them to share these wonderful people with us for as long as we had them. Their legacies are one of the many reasons why I choose to live in the Mt. Vernon community.

I look forward to seeing everyone around the neighborhood. Have a great fall, and as always, feel free to email me at mclucid@verizon.net.

Sean McCarthy
MVCA President

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Since the introduction of the newer vaccine for Shingles (HSV), there has been much confusion about its usage. In this health update, I hope to shed some light on the status of the older vaccine, Zostovax, and the newer vaccine Shingrix.

The Shingrix vaccine is reported to be 90% effective at preventing Shingles (herpes zoster), and thus preventing the most harmful consequence, post herpetic neuralgia (PHN). Shingles is the reemergence of the chicken pox virus which may remain dormant in the body for many years. When it becomes active, it migrates in the sensory nerve of the skin and presents as a group of blisters on the skin of the area that that nerve innervates.

Since it is not in the lungs, Shingles doesn't spread by droplet infection and is minimally infectious. You can still transmit the virus to individuals who never have had chicken pox, so care must be taken.

The earlier vaccine, Zostavx, is made from live, but attenuated, virus whereas the new vaccine is made from dead strains. Hence, people with compromised immune systems must avoid the live virus version.

Psoriasis sufferers on biologic therapy must choose Shingrix. Also, the vaccine should be avoided during pregnancy and lactation.

The CDC recommends all adults over the age of 50 be vaccinated—even if the individual is unaware of a history of chicken pox. Rarely people who have had Shingles previously, should vaccinate to avoid a second occurrence (uncommon). The vaccination requires two injections; the second should be administered two to six months after the first shot. Side effects mostly consist of pain and tenderness at the injection site. This usually resolves in three to five days.

The cost of the vaccine is approximately \$280 for both injections and is covered by Medicare and by Medicaid. Private insurance is spotty, so check first.

Finally, the older vaccine is better than nothing and because avoiding post herpetic neuralgia is vital, then you should consider it. PNH is very detrimental and can negatively impact your life, so heed my advice and do it.

Dr. Marv Chadab

Health & Human Services Chair

Volunteer Time: Get Involved With 'GrandInvolve!'

Are you looking for a rewarding experience that benefits Fairfax County students, teachers and families? GrandInvolve is recruiting older adults as volunteers who want to help children reach their greatest potential, right in their classroom. No experience necessary. They need just a few hours of your time to make a difference in the life of a Fairfax County student.

When you join GrandInvolve, you become part of a group of adults with varying talents, skills, knowledge and abilities, who are proud to be part of a nationally recognized program. Intergenerational volunteering gives you an opportunity to leave an important legacy of service and friendship. Visit them at the Ventures Into Volunteering Fair on October 2 at the Dulles Expo Center.

The group is currently filling volunteer needs in Title 1 elementary schools in the Mount Vernon and Lee Districts of Fairfax County. They also have existing programs in several schools scattered around the County. Hours are flexible. Visit www.grandinvolve.org or contact Cathy Hoseck, the new SAT (School Action Team) leader for GrandInvolve this year for Washington Mill Elementary School at cathyhosek@gmail.com.

PLANNING & ZONING REPORT

The June meeting was spent discussing the Woodlawn Arcadia Project. A resolution was submitted and approved in a subsequent meeting. Additionally, we discussed changes made to the 7-11 proposal after they met with the Fairfax County staff.

The County asked them to contribute to the Lukens Lane upgrades instead of undergrounding their utilities, as the committee and MVCCA had requested.

We were briefed again on the old Sunoco site, 5928 Richmond Highway, as a special exception. The service station's façade would be in keeping with Embark and the North Gate entrance to Mount Vernon. They have also proposed consideration of green options. T

he eventual elimination of Old Richmond Highway would be a problem for access. We have voted against similar previous proposals for this site.



FYI

List of upcoming changes to the current zoning regulations/requirements: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/planning-development/zmod>

Richmond Highway widening info: http://www.virginiadot.org/projects/northernvirginia/richmond_highway.asp

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Chris.White@LNF.com | 703.283.9028

TRANSPORTATION REPORT

Finally, the long-awaited paved sidewalk installation from just north of Westgate Dr. to Mount Vernon Memorial Highway (MVMH) is almost complete. It appears from observing all the work that's been done, that this project was much more complex than simply removing a few trees, leveling a pathway and paving the pathway. Huge trees were removed, a retaining wall was constructed, an underground storm water pipe was installed, a nearly level concrete

sidewalk pored and handicap safety pads have added at street crossings. Pedestrians are already using completed parts of the path. There is clear separation between the sidewalk and the west travel lane of Old Mt. Vernon

Road for most of the walkway. Fortunately, the use of concrete steps that are on the sidewalk in the existing north portion of the walkway was avoided. My only concern is that there still that there is still a very deep ditch close to the roadway, just south of the intersection near the traffic signal, that periodically snares drivers and requiring a tow truck for extraction. Both walkers and motorists will be much safer upon completion of the new walkway.

Traffic Safety Study Released

The VDOT MVMH traffic safety study was released and loaded with statistics on the traffic volume and average speed ranges, signage, sight distances and more, but failed to address the major safety concerns such as pedestrian crossing data.

The only speed adjustment recommendation was to reduce the speed limit from just west of Cherry Tree Drive to just east of Old Mt. Vernon Road from 45 to 40 MPH. The report concludes that drivers already adjust their speed limits down based on traffic conditions, and that lowering the speed limit would not alter actual average driving speeds. The Transportation Committee of the MVCCA recognized the report, but made no comments on its

proposals or lack of concern about the crosswalk problems.

Previously, I had suggested that MVCA members check on the visibility and condition of street name signs near their homes. If you find any problems, please call the County sign shop at (703)

877-2871 to request replacement or repairs.

Finally, burned out street lights do not seem to be as much of a problem this past year, but I have noticed there have been more lights that are on continuously due to defective photoelectric switches. These lights should also be reported to Dominion Electric to prevent premature failure at (888) 667-3000, followed by option 1, then option 2. Of course, as daylight hours decrease, for safe driving and walking, continue to report burned out street lights, particularly near parks, schools or areas where there are no other residents.



John Reiser

Transportation Chair

EDUCATION REPORT

2019 School Bond Referendum

Fairfax County voters will vote in November on the 2019 School Bond Referendum which presents future plans and Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) blueprint for success. A school bond referendum will be on the general election ballot Tuesday, Nov. 5, 2019. Polls will be open from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. Residents of Fairfax County may vote if they are 18 years of age or older on Election Day and have registered to vote 22 days prior to the election (on or before October 15, 2019). For more information, call 703-222-0776.

Capital funds are included in the bond for the planning of one new elementary school in the northwestern part of the county near the Metro's Silver Line and the renovations at Wakefield Forest, Louise Archer, Crossfield, Mosby Woods and Bonnie Brae Elementary schools. The bond also includes capital funds for the construction of renovations at five elementary schools: Hybla Valley, **Washington Mill**, Braddock, Fox Mill and Oak Hill Elementary schools; capacity enhancements at three high schools: West Potomac, Justice and Madison high schools; and the construction of one new elementary school in the Fairfax/Oakton area. Construction funds are also included to relocate one modular addition. The projects contained in this referendum, whether new or renovations will increase the capacity of the school system by more than 4,400 seats upon their completion. **Of note and interest to our community is project included in the bond for Washington Mill (construction) in the amount of \$ 28,727,060.** According to *the Fairfax County Public Schools FY 2020–24 Adopted Capital Improvement Program*, the Washington Mill project is in the Planning phase (funded by 2017 Bond). The 2019 Bond funds Permitting and Construction, which will begin FY 2020 and FY 2021.

Washington Mill Elementary School history goes back to early 1960's. The school opened on Sept. 3, 1963, with approximately 250 children enrolled in grades one through six; at a cost of \$496,457. In

1988, Washington Mill received its first building-wide renewal. A new building wing, with a gym and music room, was constructed. Air conditioning was installed building wide. A second addition to the school was constructed in 1996. Four classrooms were added, providing additional space for the School Age Child Care (SACC) program, along with updates to the library. During the first decade of the 2000s, the student population in southeastern Fairfax County sharply rose. A 10-room modular facility was added to the building in 2007. By 2013, the school population grew to 657 students. Planning for a second building-wide renewal began in 2018.

Mount Vernon Council of Civic Associations Update:

The Education Committee, chaired by Judy Harbeck, met on Sept. 4, 2019 at Whitman Middle School. Associations represented included Mt. Zephyr, Riverside Gardens, Newington Forest, Mt. Vernon Manor, Mt. Vernon Civic and Sulgrave Manor. Dr. Francisco Duran, FCPS Chief Equity Officer, met with the Committee to discuss the operations and activities of the Equity Office particularly in terms of addressing school accreditation under the new Virginia Standards of Accreditation (SOAs) as aligned with the Federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Also discussed were activities to assure students across the County have access to the same curriculum and services.

FCPS through Project Momentum, has adopted a proactive approach which identifies not only schools already facing difficulties with full accreditation, but also those determined to have need of additional services to maintain forward progress. School are identified as Universal (meeting all requirements); Universal Plus (meeting requirements but with circumstances such as high poverty needing additional support); Targeted (schools which have missed a benchmark or have some negative trending

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EDUCATION REPORT

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data); and Intensive (schools identified as most in need of support and in danger of not meeting SOAs). Schools deemed “Targeted” or “Intensive” receive specific financial, central office and human resources assistance aligned to specific identified needs and issues in the particular school. This is in addition to any staffing consideration all schools receive based on poverty considerations.

This approach is consistent with the Committee’s long held belief that high diversity, high poverty schools and their staffs need more direct assistance, training, and dissemination of best practices guidance from central offices and specialists. Individual school staffs are often overburdened with day-to-day crises and need help in identifying and addressing school-specific issues. Although

specialists may do some model lessons, the assistance is aimed at helping staff immediately and institutionalize best practices as part of the school culture.

New reports on progress will be coming out in October and November. Committee members and interested citizens are directed to last year’s report which has some detailed background information on SOAs, ESSA, Project Momentum. It also includes some school specific statistics which may be outdated but show trends. [https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/fairfax/Board.nsf/files/B65E6S38F21D/\\$file/SchAccountabilityProjMomenUpdates_SBWS_10318Final.FINAL%20\(002\).pdf](https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/fairfax/Board.nsf/files/B65E6S38F21D/$file/SchAccountabilityProjMomenUpdates_SBWS_10318Final.FINAL%20(002).pdf)

Sarah Fidd
Education Chair

Mount Vernon Travel 2019 Friends and Family Weekend Trips



Lancaster Day Trip
Saturday November 16, 2019
Cost: \$120.00 Per Person



Price Includes: Round Trip Bus Transportation to Lancaster PA., Kitchen Kettle Village Shopping Joy to the World at American Music Theatre at 3:00 PM, Dinner at Shady Maple Smorgasbord Restaurant. *Bus Departs from the Mount Vernon VA area at 8:00 AM and returns at 10:00 PM*



New York City Day Trip
Saturday, December 7, 2019
Cost: \$165.00 Per Person - includes Show Tickets
\$75.00 Bus Only



Price includes: Round Trip Bus Transportation to New York City and Admission to the Radio City Christmas Spectacular show at 11:30 AM (Seating in the 3rd Mezzanine)
Bus departs from the Mount Vernon VA area at 5:00 AM and returns at 10:00 PM.

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Mount Vernon Civic Association, Inc.

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MVCA Membership Meeting

Wednesday, October 9, 2019

Washington Mill Elementary School
7 p.m. pizza & soda; 7:30 p.m. program

Our guest speakers will be Delegate candidates
for the 42nd District and
School Board Representative candidates.
Their visit will give us a chance to ask a few
questions and get to know where they stand on
issues important to the Mount Vernon
community.