

**Minutes for the Bluemont Civic Association General Membership Meeting  
on  
Wednesday, December 17, 2003**

President Judah Dal Cais called the Bluemont Civic Association (BCA) meeting to order at approximately 7:11 p.m. at the Arlington Traditional School. Present, in addition to President Judah Dal Cais, were First Vice President Louis Martin, Treasurer Judy Collins, and three BCA members (including Suzanne Sundburg who took minutes). The evening's speaker, Sara Collins, was also present.

The first order of business was the presentation of the minutes from the November 19, 2003, general membership meeting. Judah Dal Cais asked for any changes to the minutes. There were none and the minutes were accepted.

Judah Dal Cais then introduced Sara Collins of the Arlington Historical Society. Mrs. Collins, originally a Michigan native, was assigned to the Virginia Room of the Arlington County Library for many years. It was in this capacity that she learned a great deal about Arlington County history, and it enhanced her own personal research on the subject.

She reviewed Arlington County history and noted that Arlington is the smallest self-governing county in the United States. She also spoke about a number of historic properties in Arlington, including the Ball-Sellers House in Glen Carlyn and the old Hume School on Arlington Ridge Road that now houses the Historical Society. She spent a portion of her lecture on the Freedman's Village, originally located on the southern end of the Arlington House estate. (It was later displaced by the cemetery.)

She also noted that there used to be an old hunting lodge in the Bluemont area. She said that it had been torn down along with many other historic properties that were destroyed during the building/redevelopment frenzy after World War II. She said that there was a lot of regret after the fact about losing so much of Arlington's history to development.

Mrs. Collins distributed booklets and other information on Arlington history and invited the membership to tour the Society's headquarters. She noted that the Historical Society is dependent on donations to survive. Judah Dal Cais asked BCA Treasurer Judy Collins to make a note of upcoming speakers at the Historical Society so that they could be advertised in the BCA newsletter. It was also noted that Judy Collins works at the Historical Society on the second Sunday of each month. Sara Collins then thanked the group for its attention and concluded her presentation.

Judah Dal Cais turned the discussion to old business.

BCA member Suzanne Sundburg noted that while the C-2 zoning changes would not affect the Safeway site, it would apply to the land currently occupied by Bob Peck Chevrolet. Another member asked if/when Bob Peck Chevrolet was planning to sell out. A discussion ensued, and it was determined that the dealership has no current plans to leave/sell.

Judah Dal Cais then said that a long-term vision (independent of the BCA Neighborhood Conservation Plan) for Wilson Boulevard west of George Mason and east of Harrison Street needed to be developed. He said that he planned to set up a working group in January or February. This group would not be open to the membership at large, due to the large number of "conflicting" opinions. Judah noted that the association had a number of "experts" in development that would be part of the working group, including Gerry Procanick and Ellen Armbruster.

Suzanne Sundburg noted that Gerry Procanick had been an ardent supporter of high-density development at the Safeway site and was therefore hardly impartial. She said that he had pushed for heavy development in an area of the neighborhood that would not affect him directly. She also pointed out that the previous handling of the Safeway redevelopment proposal had caused ongoing dissension in the neighborhood. She noted that she had voted against the Silverwood proposal because its excessive scope would overwhelm the neighborhood's infrastructure.

Suzanne Sundburg asked about the impact on the adjoining neighbors. Judah Dal Cais said that the working group would consider offering the developer a chance to tear down the houses surrounding Safeway and that naturally those who lived near the development would not be in favor of it. Suzanne Sundburg replied that while she believed that property owners had a right to sell their land if they wished, she was vehemently opposed to ousting elderly residents against their will, something that had been attempted during the previous Safeway proposal. Judah commented that he thought the developer could simply build around any holdouts, in a manner similar to the townhouse project on Washington Boulevard across from the East Falls Church Metro stop.

Judah then moved the discussion to new business. He noted that most members have not yet renewed their dues for 2004. Judah mentioned that Carl Hallinan had previously sent out a letter to recently expired members. Judy Collins told the group that this letter had been reasonably successful. She said that membership currently stands at 335 and that approximately 100 people still need to renew. She distributed a budget report for 2003 and a proposed budget for 2004.

With respect to membership retention, Judah said that he wants to consider expanding the tool loaner program. He explained that members needed something tangible and ongoing to keep them interested in the association. He said that he is looking into buying a used wood chipper that could be loaned out to members in the spring and fall to clean up brush. Judah cautioned that he wants to see how well the snow blower program goes this winter (no requests to borrow the machines thus far), but he said that he believes that offering a tool loaner program as a value-added service will help keep the membership numbers stable.

Judah Dal Cais then asked for any other updates from the floor. He asked Lou Martin about the 9<sup>th</sup> Street URD project. Lou reported that the project has slowed down. He also noted that water is collecting in the basements that have already been dug and that there is approximately three feet of water standing in them. He said that usually water is pumped out by the developer. He promised to keep an eye on the situation and if a fence is not installed or if the water is not pumped out, he said that he would contact code enforcement.

Suzanne Sundburg asked if Eric Davis had contacted Judah regarding the development issues on Kensington Street. Judah Dal Cais replied that he had sent an e-mail to Eric but had received no response.

Judah Dal Cais then adjourned the meeting.