

**Action Items/Notes**  
**Bluemont Civic Association**  
**General Membership Meeting**  
**Lubber Run Community Center**  
**April 25, 2007**

President Judah dal Cais called the meeting to order at approximately 7:05 pm. In addition to dal Cais, officers Judy Collins and Carl Drummond were present as well as members Bernard Gogel, Bob Waffle, Dave Rensch, Wendy Dean, and Suzanne Sundburg. Sundburg recorded action items/notes in the absence of Secretary Lisa Byington.

**May Newsletter**

Per the group's discussion, the text for articles will be due on Tuesday, May 9, with the final copy due to Sam Ferro on May 10. Judy Collins asked for a print date of May 17. Only two topics for the May issue were identified: the FiOS speaker for the May meeting and the upcoming elections in June.

**Speaker**

School Board member Sally Baird addressed the membership on April 25. She reviewed various School Board activities: 1) the approved proposed budget, 2) the new building at Yorktown, 3) the multisite committee, and 4) the boundary change task group.

- 1) Baird noted that funds had been redirected to a foreign language pilot program, a perimeter security study, an employee salary adjustment of 2.2%, and a minimum employee match of 1.7% for the retirement plan.
- 2) Baird reported that the schematic design of the new Yorktown high school building was approved. There are significant parking problems, as there is no student parking and students are parking on nearby neighborhood streets. One BCA member noted that the only building that required demolition was the auditorium; the rest of the campus should have been renovated, not demolished. He asked for better planning/use of funds in the future by renovating buildings rather than automatically demolishing them.
- 3) Baird noted that the Career Center on Walter Reed would not be absorbed. It will, instead, be used to house high school continuation programs. The Wilson school property will be redeveloped by an outside developer who will then have a proposed 60-year ground lease on the property. The School Board decided not to sell currently underutilized properties but instead to utilize them as efficiently as possible. The central kitchen will go away and all elementary schools will produce their own meals. Arlington Mill may be redeveloped as a science/technology school. Although the Langston building was recently renovated, its program will be moved to the Career Center, and it may be used for a Head Start program instead.

4) Baird reported the large shift of school population, leaving some schools sparsely attended while others are overcrowded. The school boundary issue will directly affect Bluemont, particularly as it relates to the admission policy at Arlington Traditional School (ATS). [Note: ATS is the only public elementary school in the County that offers no preference for nearby children to attend. Admission to ATS is granted only through the Countywide lottery system.]

Earlier this year at a meeting to review proposals to address elementary overcrowding (school boundary changes), Baird (along with two other Board members) voted against allowing any change to the ATS admission policy to be considered within the scope of the boundary change task group. Baird's justification for her vote included the fact that there is no universal admissions policy for County schools. She hopes that the task group will recommend a new, universal policy, although how that would be accomplished was unclear.

Baird also noted the large number of letters and other lobbying efforts of ATS parents, who do not want nearby Bluemont children to be given the preference of attending ATS. In Baird's view, if the admission's policy for ATS were to be considered, then that issue alone would overtake the entire discussion/focus of the task group that will address the boundary changes. She does not want the focus to be solely on ATS but on the Countywide boundary changes.

Baird suggested that the best way for Bluemont to have the ATS admissions policy changed would be for concerned residents to "lobby" members of the task group (made up of a principal and a parent from each elementary school) and School Board members.

Baird did ask that enrollment counts and new projections be reported to the Superintendent and, if so indicated, that the scope of the task group's charge be widened (perhaps to include consideration of a Countywide admissions policy).

Member Bob Waffle asked Baird for greater coordination of the schools to establish safe walking routes to the schools. He noted that some of the current flashing signs placed effectively.

### **Peck-Staples Update**

According to BCA Peck-Staples Information Coordinator Terry Serie, the County is still in negotiations with developer JBG regarding the "community benefits" that JBG may provide in exchange for the added height and density it is requesting at the Peck-Staples site. This discussion comes a little bit earlier in the process than would normally be expected. Serie is keeping a close eye on the situation for any important developments. The Site Plan Review Committee (SPRC) has indicated that no additional SPRC meetings will take place until June. Serie also is waiting for the committee to forward informal "notes" taken at the February meeting. Serie promised to advise the membership of any necessary actions that

might need to be taken in the near future. He noted that the next SPRC might be held as early as 5/14/07.

### **Miscellaneous**

Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee (NCAC) representative Wendy Dean reported that County staff member Chris Nixon had stated that there was a 95% chance that some items in the NC priority queue may receive funding, although the time horizon for that funding was not clear. Member Suzanne Sundburg reported that she had not yet forwarded the Neighborhood Infrastructure Plan (NIP) draft list to Webmaster Dave Leichtman. President dal Cais asked member Suzanne Sundburg to advertise the list in the newsletter and via the e-list and forward Dean's NIP summary and the draft list to Webmaster Dave Leichtman for uploading to the BCA Web site. It was noted that members would need some way to provide feedback (using Dean's e-mail address or an interactive form was suggested).

Treasurer Judy Collins reported that approximately 240 members had renewed for 2007.

Walking Town Meeting Coordinator Terry Serie reported that all County Board members and 20 County department managers and other County staff will be participating in the June 18 Walking Town Meeting.

According to Second Vice President Carl Drummond, the missing section of N. Frederick Street's sidewalk on the east side (the Safeway side between N. 8<sup>th</sup> Road and Wilson Boulevard) may be completed through the Missing Links program. Recently, the County has considered making the Missing Links program more flexible in order to address more projects.

President dal Cais adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:45 pm.