

Bluemont Civic Association
November 14, 2012
General Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 pm.

In attendance: George Rovder, President; John Herickhoff, 1st VP; Nancy O'Doherty, Treasurer; Mark Haynes, Secretary; Larry Smith, Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee (NCAC) Representative; Suzanne Sundburg, Dean Foster and Ed Fendley, Civic Federation Representatives; plus approximately 20 members.

Richard Best from the county's transportation division discussed the \$125K+ of traffic-calming money available for transportation improvements within Bluemont. The Peck-Staples site developer provided this funding as one of its site plan's conditions. Best requested that the Bluemont Civic Association (BCA) appoint a small working group to determine how the money might best be spent. He noted that it is not enough money for any major improvements, but it could include sidewalk, curb and gutter improvements; signs; speed bumps; etc.

Minutes

Approval of minutes: October general membership meeting minutes were approved by voice vote. There were not enough hard copies on hand to review the April 25, 2012, meeting minutes. Consideration of those minutes was tabled to the Dec. meeting.

Officer Reports

President's report: Rovder noted his intent to ensure that we have a full and open understanding of all standing special representatives and committees. Rovder stated his intent that committees that have not made at least one report annually to the membership should be dissolved.

Secretary's report: Haynes apologized for "web learning issues" that prevented the previous meeting's minutes from being uploaded to the BCA website prior to the Nov. meeting.

NCAC Rep.'s report: Smith stated that the BCA must identify a second-priority NC project so the BCA can continue to accumulate the points necessary to move its projects to the head of the NC funding queue. Potential projects include sidewalk, curb and gutter projects, etc. The average NCAC project is in the \$400K-\$500K price range.

Civic Federation report: Sundburg reported that the Nov. meeting consisted largely of a presentation on emergency preparedness. The presenters noted that Arlington will continue having severe weather and that there will be occasional power loses. Everyone was encouraged to look at the county's website to ensure each household is prepared to weather emergencies. The rest of discussion concerned the noise

ordinance. The VA State Supreme Court overturned the longstanding “reasonable person” standard, which it deemed too vague. The state now requires jurisdictions to come up with a concrete standard by which to measure noise.. Arlington is in the process of revising its noise ordinance, but current revisions do not call for police officers to carry decibel-meter equipment that would allow them to measure noise levels when complaints arise. CivFed’s Planning & Zoning Committee has developed and sent many comments to county staff on the proposed noise ordinance.

Treasurer’s report: O’Doherty reported that the BCA has \$8591.44 in the bank. She has now developed a current membership list. The BCA newsletter is the primary expense: approx. \$150/month for newsletter and about \$2,400/year for the twice a year neighborhood-wide, hand-delivered newsletter. Last year, total expenses were \$4,000, and receipts were about \$5,700.

Safeway Task Force report: Haynes moved that the new Safeway Task Force charter be approved. The new charter extends the task force’s lifespan to November 1, 2013, and expands the group’s scope of work. The motion was seconded and approved by voice vote. Haynes provided an update on the Safeway redevelopment project, and noted that another public forum was being planned for early Dec.

Arterial Roads Sidewalks & Pedestrian Safety Task Force report: Fendley reported that since its last meeting, the task force has reached out the County Board to request a meeting to discuss how to proceed. The next meeting will occur on December 8 at Two Chefs Restaurant at 8:00 am. All members are welcome. The group next will be looking at Wilson Blvd. east of George Mason Drive. It will be reaching out to neighboring civic associations and to the Ashlawn and ATS Elementary School PTAs to get on their agendas.

Rovder moved to assign the task of how to deal with the \$125K+ that is available for neighborhood transportation improvements to the Sidewalks & Pedestrian Safety Task Force. Fendley noted that the draft NC Plan might contain a possible project and echoed Best’s advice to set a deadline for project suggestion to be made. Fendley accepted this new task on a tentative basis pending approval of other task force members. Smith suggested that the BCA advertise for project ideas on the BCA website and in the newsletter to ask people who are interested in helping out on this issue to contact Rovder.

Unfinished Business

Call for volunteers: Rovder asked for volunteers to serve on the Bylaws (Procedures) Review Committee. He also asked for someone to take over as newsletter editor and called for a volunteer to serve as newsletter designer. A member suggested that a local design student might be willing/able to produce the newsletter as a class project in exchange for a small stipend.

Rovder is looking for someone to attend Ashlawn Building Level Planning Committee meetings and report back to the membership because Representative Judah dal Cais has said he is unavailable to attend BCA Wednesday evening meetings to provide reports.

Green Corridor Initiative Tree Planting update: Haynes reported on behalf of Parks & Recreation Liaison Nora Palmatier on the current tree planting plans for the Bluemont Junction Trail between N. Emerson and N. Jefferson Streets. Haynes presented a revised map for review, and member Kate Mattos volunteered to take the map home to show to neighbors living along the trail—particularly those who cannot come out in the evenings to the BCA meetings.

Rovder announced that a meeting on N. Quincy Street Plan Addendum (the revised plan for the American Service Center [Now Mercedes-Benz of Arlington] and Harris Teeter sites on Glebe Road) would be held on 11/17/12, 10 am–noon, at Barrett Elementary School.

Sundburg provided a brief overview of the parking and transportation-related issues concerning Ashlawn Elementary School's new addition, which she learned about after attending a joint County Board-School Board work session on Oct. 25. There has been some disagreement over the number of parking spaces needed at Ashlawn once the addition is built. At present, the school must meet current zoning ordinance standards, which some feel require more spaces than are needed for public buildings.

Members discussed whether the BCA should write a letter on the new noise ordinance. Rovder made this motion:

“The civic association should be allowed to write a letter to the county taking a position on the proposed revised noise ordinance.”

The motion was seconded and adopted by voice vote. The decision was made to allow the BCA Executive Board to write a letter in support of CivFed recommendations on the proposed ordinance if the matter needed to be addressed in between BCA meetings.

New Business

None was discussed.

Haynes moved to adjourn, it was seconded, and the meeting adjourned at 9:05 pm.