

BLUEMONT CIVIC ASSOCIATION
Minutes
Executive Board Meeting
September 26, 2013
Arlington Traditional School

Attending: George Rovder, President; Mark Haynes, First Vice-President and Safeway Task Force Co-chair; Laura Kirkconnell Secretary; David Hughes and Suzanne Sundburg, Civic Federation Delegates; Chris Healey, Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee (NCAC) Representative; Craig Deering, Civic Federation Alternate; Ed Fendley, Sidewalk Safety Task Force Co-chair and NCAC Alternate; Alan Sundburg, Bylaws Review Committee Chair; John Lau, Webmaster.

Rovder called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

(1) Approval of Agenda and Minutes: The Executive Board unanimously approved the agenda for the Executive Board meeting and the minutes for the August 22, 2013, Executive Board meeting.

(2) Brief Summary Reports of Officers and Committee Chairs

President: Reported that he had been invited to attend the Waycroft Woodlawn Civic Association meeting, during which the possible redevelopment of the Safeway site in Bluemont was discussed. Waycroft Woodlawn expressed interest in the process (an NC survey, community-wide town hall meetings, and meetings of the full membership prior to taking a vote) that the BCA had followed. Rovder said he handed out copies of the official Bluemont Civic Association (BCA) position, taking care not to confuse his own position with what BCA members had approved. The Waycroft Woodlawn Civic Association was supportive of the BCA position. It was noted that new member Bill McShane had paid \$5 in prorated dues (based on erroneous information on the BCA website) by check and that his check had not been deposited. Rovder promised to follow up with the Treasurer.

1st Vice-President: Discussed either disbanding the Safeway Task Force or giving it a new mission and membership. The proposed mission would be to (1) fully explore and understand current County land-use policies and zoning, what does C-1 zoning/by-right development get BCA and (2) actively come up with vision(s) for what C-1 could mean within its rights. Haynes noted that some people had misunderstood the BCA position as being one of “no change”—which is by and large not the position—instead, BCA members want appropriate, manageable development. Haynes suggested that the existing Task Force members could look at that and make a final report to the General Membership at the October meeting, and it also could propose a charter and possible membership. Executive Board members agreed, noting that the BCA had officially adopted the position to maintain C-1 zoning with by-right development, so it is incumbent on the BCA to clarify what sort of development it could envision under C-1.

NCAC Representative: Healey reported on the last meeting that discussed the Arlington Ridge Neighborhood Conservation Plan. He said BCA’s plan was in good shape, and was with County Staff for review. County staff asked BCA to reconfirm its priority projects. Healey re-sent the letter reconfirming Wilson Blvd reconfiguration as the BCA-approved priority project. NCAC was exploring with the County how the project could be funded using Neighborhood Conservation (NC) funds alone. BCA was potentially in the cycle with a final plan being presented in December and County review for the 2014 funding cycle.

Rovder discussed his attendance at the September 14 Sidewalk Safety Task Force walk-about with County staff member Ritch Viola to focus attention on the dangerous situation at N. Wakefield and Vermont Streets, on the south side of Wilson Blvd. Discussion included re-stripping to mark right-and left-turn lanes. He noted that neighbors also wanted a “do not block the box” sign at this intersection.

Civic Federation: Suzanne Sundburg noted that she had electronically sent Executive Board members a report on highlights from the Sept. 3 Civic Federation meeting, which included a discussion of the upcoming blackout table-top exercise for emergency preparedness. She said discussion of the noise ordinance had been shunted aside because urban agriculture was being given higher priority at the County level. She noted that she had already submitted her recap of the Civic Federations September 3 meeting to the Executive Board electronically. [See Attachment 1.]

Secretary: Kirkconnell said she would fix the July Executive Board minutes because she had mistakenly re-typed over an old document and listed the wrong location for the meeting. The correct location was Fire Station #2. She asked how discussion in e-mails about a query on Civic Association boundaries should be recorded. Rovder said he would include that in his report to the General Membership, so it could be recorded in the minutes.

Newsletter: Suzanne Sundburg noted the October 5 deadline for the draft newsletter text, which she had already sent electronically to Board members.

Bylaws Review Committee: Alan Sundburg shared the summary document and line-in, line-out proposed changes he planned to share at the September General Membership meeting. The plan is to advertise the changes in the October newsletter and then to have the General Membership vote in December.

Unfinished Business:

- **Website:** Lau said he was planning to set up a replacement website, and he hoped to have a recommendation in about a month.

- **Question about an NCAC Alternate:** The BCA Bylaws do not mention the position of NCAC Alternate, and the Bylaws Review Committee (BRC) has proposed it be added. If the membership approves this change, at the next election the General Membership would elect an NCAC Alternate who would serve at NCAC meetings in the absence of the NCAC Rep and as an ex officio member of the BCA Executive Board. Healey thought that the existing language proposed by the BRC might need to be adjusted slightly to provide greater flexibility.

- **Kiosk:** Rovder reported that the sign announcing tonight's meetings was taken down within two hours of being posted on the outside of the new notice kiosk. On September 25, the BCA finally received the key to the notice kiosk from the County, and all messages will be posted inside the kiosk from now on.

New Business:

None

Meeting was adjourned at 7:29 pm.

September 3, 2013, Civic Federation Meeting Highlights

BCA Delegate Suzanne Sundburg and Alternate Dean Foster attended. President Michael McMenamin noted various committee chair vacancies and an Executive Committee vacancy and asked for volunteers to contact him. He then introduced the candidates for School Board, County Board, and the Virginia Assembly: James S. Lander running unopposed for Arlington County Board; Audrey R. Clement (G) and G. N. "Jay" Fiset Jr. (D) running for Arlington County Board; K. Rob Krupicka (D) running for the 45th district House seat—his opponent, Jeffrey J. Engle (I) did not attend; Laura R. Delhomme (L) and Patrick A. Hope (D) running for the 47th district House seat; Bob Brink (D) running unopposed for the 48th district House seat; and Alphonso Lopez (D) and Terrence W. Modglin (IG) running for the 49th district House seat.

Candidates' Night Forum

The turnout for the forum was very modest, perhaps due to the fact that so many of the races are not competitive. Lander, Brink and Krupicka were allowed to make speeches and answer questions. Lander was asked about reversing his position on the sale of the Wilson School site. He replied that technically, the School Board had not yet voted to approve the sale but to negotiate with a developer.

Brink, Krupicka, Hope, and Lopez largely repeated the stump speeches they delivered at the May legislative delegation program. First-time candidate Delhomme advocates repealing the state income tax. Hope touted the new \$8 million housing trust fund and noted his bipartisan work to help cover 400,000 uninsured Virginians who need healthcare. Modglin and Lopez clashed over abortion rights: Modglin gave his full support to protecting the "unborn," whereas Lopez stated that a woman's right to choose was "nonnegotiable." Both supported the expansion of access to affordable healthcare though they differed somewhat on their approaches.

Fisette and Clement clashed over affordable housing. Fisette touted the county's expenditure of 5.3% on affordable housing—a higher percentage than some other local jurisdictions. Clement countered that the percentage wasn't meaningful because it cost \$245,000 to produce one unit of affordable housing in Arlington, whereas it cost just \$100,000 per unit in Fairfax. Fisette strongly supported the Columbia Pike streetcar, which he said fulfill the "vision" of Columbia Pike. Clement countered, expressing concern about other systems around the country having been engineered to run on uncongested arterials, which Columbia Pike isn't. She noted the much cheaper bus option and supported activist Peter Rousellot's analysis of the streetcar option. Both candidates supported sustainable energy use, although Clement opined that the county's sustainable energy plan "wasn't worth the paper it was written on" unless it was supported by Dominion Virginia Power.

Announcements

Jackie Snelling announced the 9/24, 7 pm, emergency power blackout planning event at Arlington Central Library. Kathryn Scruggs announced an affordable housing meeting on 9/26 at the Navy League building. Jerry Auten asked for someone to volunteer to be a co-chair for the Transportation Committee. It was noted that the Cultural Affairs and Legislative Committees both need chairs.

New Business

Carla de La Pava and Karen Klingler plan to route a survey to all delegates and alternates to try and determine ways to recruit more active members. The Executive Committee planned to take up the appointment of a parliamentarian at its next meeting. The Revenues & Expenditures (R&E) Committee presented a draft motion supporting the creation of an independent auditing authority to review the Arlington County budget and select programs and projects. See Attachment 1 for the draft motion language, which was referred back to R&E for review. John Vihstadt stated that he would make a 15-minute presentation at the October 1 meeting to review the county's Urban Agriculture Committee's recommendations on hen-keeping and other proposed agricultural initiatives.

**Proposed Resolution: Establish an Independent Authority to Review the
Arlington County Budget and Selected Programs and Projects**

WHEREAS,

- The Arlington County budget has grown to over \$1 billion, and the County has insufficient internal budget controls and review processes;
- Nearby jurisdictions (Fairfax and Montgomery Counties) have established budget and program/project review mechanisms that have resulted in substantial savings;
- The County has recently witnessed significant cost overruns in conjunction with Artisphere operations, Signature Theater operations (i.e., nonpayment of county taxes), and the Columbia Pike Super Stop construction;
- The County proposes to incur expenditures in the range of \$250–\$400 million without formal taxpayer approval or independent review;
- The ACCF has approved, as part of its annual budget recommendations for FY 2012 and FY 2013, the study, funding and establishment of an independent budget review authority; and
- The County’s own auditors in its FY 2012 audit letter accompanying the audit report on the County’s finances recommended that the County “Establish an Independent Internal Audit Function” and further stated, “At present, the County does not have an independent internal audit function. We believe that an organization with the County’s size and complexity warrants consideration of an internal audit function. . . . Establishment of an internal auditing function could result in substantial benefits to the County in terms of strengthened internal control and increased efficiency.”

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED,

That the County immediately fund a study by independent, qualified advisors for the purpose of establishing an independent County budget review authority similar in function and purpose to that of Fairfax County’s Office of Financial & Program Auditor (OFPA) that will provide Arlington County residents and taxpayers with reasonable assurances that their taxes and fees are being effectively and efficiently spent, with adequate safeguards to protect against waste, fraud and abuse.