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**Bluemont Civic Association**  
**PO Box 5134**  
**Arlington, Virginia 22205**  
<http://members.xoom.com/bluemont/>

**[BCA Officers and Representatives](#)**

**Fifth Street North Sidewalk Assessment  
Vote at December BCA Meeting**

To encourage the construction of sidewalks, Arlington County Board members in September indicated unanimously their intention to end the longstanding policy of assessing residential property owners a portion of the costs associated with new sidewalks or curbs. However, it remains to be determined whether the new no-assessment policy will apply to 5th Street North - west of Greenbrier Street - a block where a resident-initiated sidewalk project was ongoing at the time of the Board's decision.

At the December 22 BCA General Meeting, members will vote whether to support 5th Street residents in requesting that the County Board ensure that the new no-assessment sidewalk policy applies to property owners on blocks where a resident-initiated sidewalk project had not been fully completed and/or residents had not been assessed associated costs as of September 30, 1999. According to County staff, 5th Street North may be the only such street in Arlington.

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**The November 1970 position of the  
Association on the Construction of I-66**

The *Northern Virginia Sun's* November 11, 1970 editorial on I-66 had this to say about the Stonewall Jackson's Citizens Association (now Bluemont) position on the construction of I-66:

*"... most citizens appear  
to oppose construction of*

**Ballston Partnership News**

The Ballston Partnership was formed in 1985 for the primary purpose of encouraging economic development in the Ballston area. The Partnership provides an opportunity for its five main constituencies (citizens, developers, tenants, government, and professionals) to work together in promoting Ballston as a desirable business and residential location. At the same time, the Partnership's mission is to encourage a spirit of community pride and to ensure the quality of life and quality of urban design within Ballston.

Recently the Arlington Gateway project, with its hotel, residential building and office building, has been approved and will move forward to construction this spring. NRECA II at the corner of Wilson and Glebe has also been approved. Other upcoming projects include Ballston Point (at the Hecht's parking lot at the corner of Wilson and Glebe) and Fairgate II (at the corner of Fairfax Drive and Glebe Road, across from the Ballston Campus of Marymount University ).

A study is currently planned to determine what can be done to make the Ballston Commons Mall more accessible and what types of development would be appropriate on the west side of Glebe Road. At the same time, changes are being planned to make Glebe Road safer for pedestrians.

If you would like more information or if you would like to provide input on these or other related issues, please contact Gerry Procanick.

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**Abingdon Street Approved for Planning  
Grant**

On Monday evening, December 13, residents of N. Abingdon Street met at Lubber Run Recreation Center to hear an update on the neighborhood's request for Neighborhood Conservation (NC) funding. The meeting was convened by Melodee Melin, of 734 Abingdon,

*Route 66 through our neighborhood. However, in view of our peoples' pessimism about the coming of Route 66, much of our attention has been given to mitigating the undesirable impact it would have on our citizens and their property. Our citizens feel most strongly that each side of the Route 66 right-of-way should be bordered by a heavy fence suitable for restraining children"*

[\*Editor's note: the 1970 version of I-66 was an eight lane at-grade Shirley Highway look-alike with only a chain link fence "with ivy" separating the neighborhood from the freeway. It was the through efforts of our Association and others that the road was ultimately built below grade with sound walls and other amenities for the neighborhoods.]

#### **Jefferson/Kensington Street Committee Votes on Traffic-Calming**

The Jefferson/Kensington Street Project Committee held a meeting on November 30 to discuss and vote on intermediate and long-term solutions for traffic calming and pedestrian safety on these streets. The Project will proceed with a design and implementation approach. Under this approach, the project Committee in June will ask the Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee (NCAC) to fund a street design study wherein County engineers and planners will work with the Committee to design changes to streets based on the Committee's recommendations and Bluemont's priorities.

Based on the results of this meeting, the Association will request that several specific elements be incorporated in the design. During the design process, County staff will determine the feasibility of these recommendations, and may suggest alternatives. Sidewalks are the main

who is serving as block coordinator and liaison to the Bluemont Civic Association Projects Committee and NC representative.

The meeting was called to formally announce that Abingdon Street had been approved on December 9 for a planning grant of up to \$50,000 to pay for design services, which will be provided by County Public Works staff. Robert Collins, the County's NC Capital Projects Coordinator, made a presentation and together with Carl Hallinan, Bluemont Civic Association President, Sam Kubiak, Project Committee Chair, and Ed Fendley, Bluemont's NC Representative, fielded questions about how the design process works and how residents will be able to provide input on the various design and engineering options available. No actions were taken at the meeting.

Participants learned:

- 1) The funding for design will not be available until spring
- 2) When funding becomes available, meetings will be announced so residents can hear from County staff what options are feasible for traffic calming, improving pedestrian safety, and enhancing the appearance of the street. Not all options may be appropriate for Abingdon Street.
- 3) Once the constraints are clear, the County and residents will use the design process to develop the optimum alternative, or alternatives, and work toward a consensus.

The design process is expected to take several months or more. Actual physical improvements will likely take several years to implement and will be done in phases.

The good news is - whatever improvements are made will not require an assessment of individual property owners. Work will be funded through NC, perhaps supplemented by other sources, if eligible. Ms. Melin reminded residents that Abingdon Street is very fortunate to have this opportunity for funding. Twenty projects competed in the current NC round; this

priority, with the east side of Kensington and the east side of Jefferson prioritized first. Under new County guidelines, homeowners will not be assessed a fee for sidewalks in front of their property, though a petition process will still be necessary before construction begins.

To minimize impact on existing landscaping and greenery, the Committee is requesting that the streets be narrowed and the recovered land be used for the sidewalks rather than building the sidewalks in the existing right-of-way where large trees grow.

The Committee is also recommending the following:

- multiway stop signs along Kensington (though it is unclear whether the intersections will meet current County guidelines for implementation);
- flat-top speed humps for both streets and a small, permanent speed display unit for Kensington;
- bike path crossing on Kensington - an improvement consisting of nubs or other physical impediments to narrow the traffic lane passage. (This will slow the traffic while permitting bike path patrons more time and visibility to react to oncoming traffic. )

The Association will submit these recommendations and the funding request to the NCAC for approval in June and will notify residents of the outcome of their vote.

one ranked second. Among the reasons for this high ranking: Bluemont's plan is newly adopted and, although Abingdon is not the NC Plan's top priority, it is the first put forth by Bluemont for funding.

Consistent with the adopted NC Plan, Abingdon's request calls for improving safety for pedestrians and moderating the negative impact of heavy traffic volumes. In the 35-year old NC Program, the Abingdon design effort will be the County's first test of the process by which design is viewed as a separate first phase of project development.

Questions on future Abingdon Street activities can be directed to Melodee at (703) 524-1086 (eves.) or Robert Collins (703) 228-3809. All Abingdon residents are urged to get involved and watch for flyers announcing future meetings beginning in the spring.

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### **So what are you doing to ring in the New Year?**

If you plan on being at home on New Year's Eve, come on down to the Bicentennial Bell at the corner of Wilson Blvd. and George Mason Drive and literally ring in the new year with your neighbors. We intend to *ring the bell out of the bell* at midnight to welcome year 2000. And we're certain the bell will work even if the Y2K bug shows up.

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