

# BCA News

October 2000 • Vol. 3, No. 8 • Post Office Box 5134 • Arlington, Virginia 22205  
<http://members.nbci.com/bluemont/>



## inside

A Road Diet for Wilson Boulevard  
Final Consideration of 9th Street Residential Development  
Vote to Approve Kensington, Abingdon Projects  
St. Ann's Suggests Modified Building Plan  
BCA Votes on Washington Boulevard Sidewalk Design  
County Trees Available  
Harrison, Vermont Street Traffic Calming  
Community Bell-Ringing Schedule  
A Bike Trail to the New Park?  
Recap of Other News  
Nominating Committee for BCA Officers  
Sidewalk Construction Now Free of Charge  
Bluemont Remembers: Neighborhood History  
Girl Scouts at Ashlawn Need Leaders

### NEXT BLUEMONT CIVIC ASSOCIATION (BCA) MEETING:

Tuesday, March 28 - 7 p.m.  
Arlington Traditional School - 855 North Edison Street  
Multi-purpose room - All are welcome

### NEIGHBORHOOD DAY: MAY 12, 2001

## A Road Diet for Wilson Boulevard

Is it possible to improve traffic flow on an arterial road like Wilson Boulevard while making it safer for pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists - without using any additional land? It may sound too good to be true. But several American towns have succeeded in doing just that, according to transportation experts (see sidebar article on the following page).

*Road Diet, continued, page 2*

## Final Consideration of 9th Street Residential Development

At the March 28 meeting of the Bluemont Civic Association, members will decide whether to recommend that the Arlington County Board approve a final proposal for the redevelopment of 5129, 5133, and 5137 9th Street North. The owners of these properties are seeking approval under a special process to replace the three existing houses and replace them with four new houses. The owners are also proposing to improve the area in front of those properties by adding curbs, sidewalk, and gutters. In September and January, BCA members gave consideration to the landowners' preliminary proposals. BCA members recommended that any redevelopment of the properties provide relatively affordable housing, be compatible with the existing neighborhood, make street and sidewalk improvements, and preserve trees as best possible.

According to Arlington County staff, the County Board will give strong consideration to the views of the Bluemont Civic Association in deciding whether to approve the redevelopment. The Board is scheduled to consider the proposal on April 21. ■

***Road Diet, continued from cover***

At the March 28 meeting of the Bluemont Civic Association guest speaker Charles Denney, a nationally known transportation planner, will speak about the "road diets" program. BCA members will then decide whether to recommend further investigation of a road diet as part of the ongoing discussions on Wilson Boulevard between neighborhood residents and Arlington County staff. ■

**St. Ann's Suggests Modified Building Plan**

In an effort to address concerns expressed by representatives of the Bluemont Civic Association, St. Ann's Church has revised its original plan for replacing the church building. The parish intended to replace the entire greenspace at the corner of North 10th and Frederick Streets with a parking lot, raising concerns among some neighbors. The initial plan called for 38 parking spaces at the corner. The new plan would limit the spaces to about 18 and would provide a 25-30 foot wide landscaping buffer around the outer perimeter of the lot.

Under the church's plan, the parking exits on Harrison Street and at the base of Frederick Street would be retained. To replace a lost parking exit on 10th Street, a second exit would be added to Frederick Street between the school and the new church building.

BCA representatives have researched how parking is utilized by the parish, both in the church parking lot and on neighborhood streets, and have concluded that ample parking will be available under the new plan. The BCA may decide to request that the County remove current parking restrictions on the south side of 10th Street between Harrison and Frederick, which would provide even more church parking.

St Ann's proposal would require a variance to Arlington County building codes. At a future BCA general meeting, St. Ann's will present the plan and seek support for the new design. St. Ann's hopes to break ground by the end of summer. ■

**Excerpted from "Road Diets: Losing Width and Gaining Respect"**

by Dan Burden and Peter Lagerwey

<http://www.walkable.org/download/rdiets.pdf>

Transportation engineers and safety specialists have long known that overloaded two-lane or four-lane roads of any volume can be risky places to drive, conduct business, attempt to access transit, walk or bicycle. On such roadways, frequent turning movements into commercial and residential driveways can result in high crash levels... Many of these roadways would be better designed with odd numbers of lanes or two lanes, plus medians with turning pockets... By keeping the full number of lanes at intersections, 4-lane to 2-lane conversions often keep the same high capacity of original 4-lane roadways. Turn lanes can be created at intersections...

Burcham Road in East Lansing, Michigan, was formerly a "fat road." Speeds were excessive. Pedestrians near the high school found it unsafe to cross the four-lane roadway. Neighbors complained about noise and danger. East Lansing's traffic engineer, John Matusik, P.E., felt that this roadway was a prime candidate for a road diet. The roadway carried 11-14,000 cars per day.

Viewed from another perspective, 14,000 cars in four lanes over a ten hour period is only 3,500 per lane per day, or 350 per hour for a ten-hour period. Each lane is capable of carrying 1,900 cars per hour. Thus, cutting the number of lanes in half wouldn't affect traffic capacity.

The change on Burcham Road was made. With leftover road space John added two-way left turn lanes and bike lanes. The bike lanes give motorists more border width, moving them six feet further from fixed objects such as utility poles, hydrants and other fixed objects. Cars move today at more uniform speeds (prudent drivers set prevailing speeds). People are able to enter and exit driveways more easily. Pedestrians have six feet more separation from motorists. Comfort levels of all people using the corridor have markedly improved. ■

## **Vote to Approve Kensington and Abingdon Projects**

Members of the Bluemont Civic Association (BCA) at the March 28 general meeting will decide whether to seek funding from the Arlington County neighborhood conservation program for street safety projects on Kensington Street and on Abingdon Street, both between Carlin Springs Road and Wilson Boulevard. The BCA voted to approve requests for design funding for both projects last year. This vote is to approve the request for construction funds. Both projects seek to build or improve sidewalks to meet minimum safety standards of the County.

Currently, most of Kensington Street south of Wilson does not have sidewalks on either side of the street. The project proposes new sidewalks on the east side of the street from 5th Street to 8th Road. The sidewalks would be built so that they do not restrict street or driveway parking. Curb and gutter would also be built on the west side of the block between 8th Street and 8th Road.

On Abingdon Street, the existing sidewalk is blocked by telephone poles, signs, and large utility boxes. This has rendered the sidewalk unusable to for people with strollers, people in wheelchairs, or children on bikes. The project calls for a four-foot planting/utility strip to be built on the west side of the street. Utility poles and street signs will be moved out of the sidewalk and into the utility strip. This will result in a usable sidewalk, as well as a narrowing of the street from 36 feet to 32 feet. Efforts will be made to ensure that no on-street parking will be lost and to minimize the impact on existing trees. The project would include grass and tree planting.

Although not included in this funding request, the master plan proposal for Abingdon includes nubs and a raised crosswalk at the intersection with 7th Road, and a reconfiguration of the intersection at North Carlin Springs Road to slow turning traffic and create a safe pedestrian crossing. Informational meetings, a field trip, and block walks have been undertaken over the past year to garner neighborhood input on both proposed projects. ■

## **BCA Votes on Washington Boulevard Sidewalk Design**

At the February 28 meeting of the Bluemont Civic Association (BCA), members voted for curb nubs, enhanced crosswalks, and tree preservation in conjunction with the new sidewalk that will be built on Washington Boulevard between Jefferson and Frederick Streets.

BCA recommendations will be considered by Arlington County staff and Washington Boulevard residents as the sidewalk project enters the final design phase. Curb nubs are typically used to help pedestrians cross the street and to help protect vehicles parked along the street.

Arlington County Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator Ritch Viola, who attended the February 28 meeting, said that sidewalk construction could begin by the end of 2001.

According to Mr. Viola, the project will involve narrowing somewhat the Washington Boulevard roadway, which is currently wider than necessary. This will help provide additional space for street trees or on-street-parking. Narrowing the roadway could also help to discourage speeding, Mr. Viola noted. As part of the project, the telephone pole at the southwest corner of Washington Boulevard and Harrison Street will be relocated in order to improve visibility. ■

## **County Trees Available**

Under a new program, Arlington County will plant trees on certain public property as requested by neighborhood civic associations. To be eligible for a new tree, the planting area must generally be at least four feet wide and must be in the public right-of-way. In the Bluemont neighborhood, the most likely eligible areas would be the four-foot-wide grass strips that are sometimes found between the street and the sidewalk.

If you know of any good candidate locations, contact Ed Fendley (efendley@juno.com; 527-6118) or another BCA officer. ■

## **Harrison, Vermont Street Traffic Calming, But When?**

Arlington County staff for the Neighborhood Traffic Calming (NTC) program have suggested - but not confirmed -- that Harrison Street between Wilson and Washington Boulevards and Vermont Street between Wilson and Carlin Springs Road will become eligible for traffic calming project funding in the Fall of 2001.

The NTC decision-making process will involve residents of those streets as well as representatives of the Bluemont Civic Association. Jefferson Street south of Wilson Boulevard is also slated to enter the NTC process, but it is unclear as to when.

## **A Bike Trail to the New Park?**

At the March 28 meeting of the Bluemont Civic Association, members will decide whether to advocate the construction of a multi-use trail that would connect the Four Mile Run trail to Powhatan Springs Park, the new County park planned for the 6000 block of Wilson Boulevard.

A new trail would allow Bluemont residents to bicycle or walk to the park without having to travel on Wilson Boulevard. Arlington County planners support the construction of a trail, but are not actively pursuing a trail at this time.

According to residents of the Boulevard Manor neighborhood (the location of the new park) some neighbors of the new park support the idea of a bike trail. Some, however, are concerned that a new trail would foster crime.

According to Arlington County staff, the Dominion Hills pool club - which is next to the new park - has not taken a formal position on the trail proposal.

If the Bluemont Civic Association decides to advocate a new trail, volunteers would be needed to work with local residents and County staff in addressing concerns and finding the best location for a trail.

## **Sidewalk Construction Now Free of Charge**

The Arlington County Board in 2000 decided to eliminate any charges to homeowners for the construction of new sidewalks in front of their property. Previously, residential property owners were responsible for a portion of the cost of new sidewalks. The new policy is in part designed to encourage sidewalk construction.

## **Recap of Other News**

- Following the protests of the Bluemont Civic Association, **Safeway** has decided not to seek approval to construct a gas station on Edison Street at Wilson Boulevard.
- Arlington County approved funding for **sidewalks and curbs** on **10th Street** North between George Mason Drive and Emerson Street.
- **Borromeo Housing** Inc. no longer plans to own and operate a group home for young mothers at 600 North Abingdon Street, owing to unforeseen construction costs.
- **Kirkbride Construction** is pursuing multi-lot residential infill developments on the 800 block of Emerson Street and the 5100 block of 10th Street.
- The Bluemont Civic Association members on February 28 voted to recommend approval of the **Ruby Tuesday** restaurant's proposal for outdoor seating and other changes near the Ballston metro station.

## **Nominating Committee for BCA Officers**

Volunteers are needed to form a Bluemont Civic Association committee to nominate candidates for BCA offices. New officers will be elected at the BCA annual meeting on June 12.

Contact Ed Fendley (efendley@juno.com; 527-6118).

### **Community Bell-Ringing Schedule**

Parents - don't forget to give your kids a chance to ring the Constitutional Bicentennial Bell at the corner of Wilson Boulevard and George Mason Drive on federal holidays! ■

### **What's on Your Mind?**

We like to hear from our neighbors! Feel free at any time to drop a line to an officer of the Bluemont Civic Association with your questions, concerns, or comments about any neighborhood matter. BCA officers' emails and addresses are located on the last page of this newsletter. ■

### **Girl Scouts at Ashlawn Need Leaders**

Girl Scouts at Ashlawn enjoy learning, teamwork, and leadership as they have fun in a safe environment. We currently have five troops at Ashlawn that meet about every two weeks. Adult leaders are needed. Can you help?

Adult members of the Girl Scout Movement serve as role models to girls in inspiring them to these high ideals. Female and male leaders show girls how they can become happy and resourceful citizens. If you can volunteer, contact Barbara Brosnahan, (703) 812-9261, brosnahan4@aol.com. ■

# **Won't You Please Join Us?**

If you're not yet a member of the Bluemont Civic Association, we'd love to have you join! The cost is just \$1 per month. An active and robust membership helps the Association to better represent the neighborhood on matters including traffic calming, infill development, commercial development, park improvements, and pedestrian safety. The annual membership fee is \$12. To join for the remainder of 2001, send a check for \$9 (made out to Bluemont Civic Association) to Box 5134, Arlington VA 22205.

### **BCA Membership**

BCA membership costs \$14 per household for a membership through the end of 2001.

**To join, send a check to:**

Treasurer, Bluemont Civic Association, PO Box 5134, Arlington, VA 22205

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

# Bluemont

# HISTORY

## Did You Know?

### **Streetcar Suburb**

In 1912, the Washington & Old Dominion Rail Road completed the connection between Georgetown and its older line along Four Mile Run. At the junction of these two lines, passengers could catch a train to the railroad's terminus at the town of Bluemont in Loudoun County. This tiny town on the Blue Ridge gave its name to a division of the rail line, the railroad junction, and eventually to a street, park, bicycle trail, civic association, and neighborhood. The Washington, Arlington & Falls Church Electric Railway had already constructed a trolley line through the Bluemont area in the 1890's with stops at Lacey (Glebe Road), Sunnyside (Edison Street), Mulhall (Frederick Street) and Veitch Summit (Harrison Street). ■

## BCA Officers and Representatives

---

<b>President</b> <i>efendley@juno.com</i>	Ed Fendley 527-6118
<b>First Vice President</b> <i>dspringberg@aol.com</i>	David Springberg 528-4630
<b>Second Vice President</b> <i>ttwrec@aol.com</i>	Talmadge Williams 522-5575
<b>Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee Representative</b> <i>bhberne@yahoo.com</i>	Bernard Berne 243-0179
<b>Treasurer</b> <i>spicerca@gunet.georgetown.edu</i>	Carol Spicer 524-7843
<b>Secretary</b> <i>KGDecarlo@netzero.net</i>	Karen DeCarlo 525-5467
<b>Past President</b> <i>carl.hallinan@home.com</i>	Carl Hallinan 812-4797
<b>Webmaster</b>	Julie Downie <i>jmdownie@ids2.idsonline.com</i>
<b>Newsletter Editor</b>	Carla Uriona
<b>Newsletter Distribution Coordinator</b>	Judy Collins
<b>Meeting Advertising</b>	Win Boerckel

## Civic Federation Representatives

<b>Delegates</b>	<b>Alternates</b>
Bob Atkins	Ellen Armbruster
Gerry Procanick	Bernard Berne
Talmadge Williams	Melodee Melin
Adrienne Pilot	Ed Fendley

## Committee Chairs

**Lacey Woods Park:**  
Karen DeCarlo, *KGDecarlo@netzero.net*, 525-5467

**Safeway Redevelopment Advisory Committee:**  
John Van Doren, *vdoren@pipeline.com*, 522-6170

**Street and Sidewalk Projects:**  
Sam Kubiak, *samkubiak@aol.com*, 908-9683

**Wilson Boulevard Working Group:**  
Robert Waffle, *rwaffle@erols.com*, 358-9448

### BCA Calendar - Meetings & Events

March 13	Executive Committee meeting, 7:30 pm, Arlington Traditional School Extended day room
March 28	General Meeting, 7:00 pm, Arlington Traditional School Multi-purpose room

**NEIGHBORHOOD DAY: MAY 12, 2001**