

BCA News

May 2004 • Vol. 8, No. 4 • Post Office Box 5134 • Arlington, Virginia 22205

VISIT OUR WEBSITE! www.bluemontcivic.org



inside

How Would You Like To Be VP?

Disappearing "Drive 25 MPH" Signs

Register Now for Kindergarten

NC Projects Update

New Proposal for Abingdon Street

Why Join BCA?

Amendments to BCA's NC Plan

How Would You Like To Be VP?

The BCA Nominations Committee is looking for two volunteers, one to serve as First Vice President and the other to serve as Secretary of the civic association. Neither position requires any experience or special skills, however, both positions require attending two evening meetings per month (just one a month in the summer). In addition, the Secretary must record the actions that occur at meetings.

Please consider volunteering a little bit of your time to help your neighborhood. It's a great way to meet people and learn more about what's happening on the local level. If you think you might be willing to serve in one of these positions, or if you know of someone who might be interested, please contact Nominations Committee Chair Bob Atkins at luddite2003@yahoo.com (phone: 703-527-8858) or Co-chair Carl Hallinan at carlhallinan@comcast.net (phone: 703-812-4797). ■

Disappearing "Drive 25 MPH" Signs

You may have noticed signs in Bluemont asking you to "Keep Kids Alive – Drive 25 MPH." They were available free to all Arlington neighborhoods and, due

to their popularity, are no longer available. Some Bluemont residents have recently reported their signs missing.

The signs could be missing for a number of reasons, including vandals, other residents, or County Code Enforcement. There have been reports of people stealing signs. Because they are so popular, unfortunately there maybe people removing signs from a home to use on their own property. You can report theft of signs to Arlington's Office of Code Enforcement at 703-228-3232. Signs are to be placed only on residential property. They are not to be located in the public right-of-ways (which include medians), planting strips (the grassy area between a sidewalk and the curb), or on other public property/areas. Code Enforcement will remove any signs that are not correctly installed.

A good way to hold on to your sign and possibly increase its effectiveness is to put it out at periodic intervals: perhaps on the weekend when you are home and can keep an eye on it, or on a particularly day or at a particular time when you've noticed speeders, or when your children are out in the yard. By having the signs appear periodically, drivers are less likely to begin ignoring them and may even be more alert to their presence. We also recommend against leaving the signs outside overnight. ■

Car break-ins in Bon Air Neighborhood

Several cars in the Bon Air subdivision have been broken into in the past week and had radios and tools stolen. All of the known incidents have occurred on the cul de sac streets off of Kensington Street that end at Bluemont Park. The burglaries have occurred at night, in front of the owners' houses. In one case, the car was parked in the driveway.

Don't Wait—Register Now for Kindergarten

Is your child five years old or will he or she turn five before September 30, 2004? If so, it's time to get them ready for kindergarten. Our neighborhood elementary schools, Ashlawn and McKinley, are calling on all families with children who will be starting Kindergarten this fall ('04) to register their children

now. It's easy. Simply visit the office of your school (review the school boundary map at www.arlington.k12.va.us or call 703-228-6005 or 703-228-7660 to help identify your neighborhood school) and ask for a registration packet. Fill out the forms and have your child's doctor complete "the green health form." You will also need to show proof of residency and your child's birth certificate. Return all information in person to your child's school office. ■

Neighborhood Conservation Update

The next project-funding round of the Neighborhood Conservation (NC) Program is coming up in June. This round will allocate the rest of the money, approximately \$1.6 million, left in the budget that is funded by the Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee (NCAC) bond.

Bluemont's "first-priority project" in June will be the one on 9th Street North and a portion of North Frederick Street and will consist of street repaving, construction of curbs and gutters as well as a sidewalk on the north side of the street, and new street lights. Originally, we submitted the projects for both streets (Frederick & 9th) as a single unit. Unfortunately, the price tag for this combined project was well over the \$250,000 project cap. By dividing the project into two phases (one phase for 9th Street and part of N. Frederick, and the second phase for the rest of N. Frederick), each phase stands a better chance of being funded. The developer of the new homes on 9th Street N. will be contributing some funds to phase one.

The 9th Street/Frederick Street project is one of 24 projects being considered for funding. We will know if we received funding at the next NCAC meeting on June 10. Now is a good time to encourage everyone to support the new bond at the election in November. This bond money goes directly to neighborhood improvement projects such as sidewalks, lighting, and curb and gutter, as well as other safety and beautification improvements. We want to ensure that there will be money in the budget for future Bluemont projects.

Status of already-funded Bluemont NC projects:

N. 10th Street – Has had its 90% design meeting and is awaiting easements. Next step is to relocate utilities and conduct a preconstruction meeting.

N. Kensington Street – Has completed its 90% design meeting and is in procurement. Next step is a preconstruction meeting.

N. Harrison Street – Has completed its 50% design meeting. Next step is the 90% design meeting.

N. 5th Street – Design is 35% complete. Scheduling survey.

N. 7th Street – Work order has been sent to DPW to start project and request a schedule. ■

Wilson a Potential ATM Project

Arlington County Board members have called for a pilot project under the Arterial Transportation Management (ATM) program, and Wilson Boulevard is a candidate site.

At an informal work session on May 4, Board members supported the continuation of the ATM process, which over the last year has included a series of workshops and walks for Four Mile Run Drive, south Carlin Springs Road, and Wilson Boulevard west of George Mason Drive. Based on this community input, a transportation consultant proposed street and sidewalk design concepts to make each of these corridors safer, while maintaining their functionality.

The Arterial Transportation Management Task Force, a citizens advisory group, is expected to recommend at its May 27 meeting which of these three corridors should proceed to the engineering and construction phase.

In March, Bluemont Civic Association members reviewed the ATM conceptual proposals and voted to ask the County Board to fund a pilot project on Wilson Boulevard (while reserving the right to review and approve the final designs). The BCA Wilson Boulevard Committee will consider making additional efforts to promote Wilson as a potential site for the ATM's first project. Contact Bob Waffle (rwaffle@comcast.net or 703-358-9448) for information or to help the committee. ■

New Proposal for Abingdon Street

At BCA's May 11 executive board meeting, Scot Harlan (the representative for Potomac Custom Builders and Arlington Property Management) presented prospective development plans for the parcel located at 4604 and 4610 Wilson Boulevard, just east of Abingdon Street. The same group had previously planned to build townhouse units on just the parcel at 4610 Wilson and to purchase the sliver of County right-of-way property next to Abingdon Street in order to make the project viable. However, they purchased the adjoining apartment complex at 4604 Wilson and revised their plans instead.

Scot showed the group two sets of plans. The first was a 4-story, 31-unit apartment building (with 2 floors of underground parking) that could be built by right, without requiring any variances from the County. The second set of plans was for 20-unit rental townhouse complex, requiring County variances on the north, south and west sides of the property. The set-back for the townhouse project would 10 feet (instead of 25 feet for by right development) on the side facing Wilson Boulevard; the set-back for the Abingdon Street side would be 8

feet (instead of 16 feet by right) — not including the land owned by the County; and the set-back along the alley in the rear would be 8 to 10 feet (instead of 16 feet by right).

Scot said the advantage of the townhouse project was the reduction in density (20 instead of 31 units). He also felt that the townhouses would provide a more residential feel to the project (a similar look to the Ballston Crest townhouses next door). Scot noted that each townhouse unit would have two underground or ground level parking spaces and that there would be two additional spaces for handicapped parking.

As far as the County's adjoining property was concerned, Scot told the executive board that he would be willing to grade and landscape that area, if he could obtain the necessary easement from the County. The landscaping would involve removing and replacing the existing mature trees (referred to as "trash" trees by Carl and Scot).

The builder has already met twice with residents living adjacent to the property. The BCA executive board has asked that a representative of the Abingdon Street block committee present the committee's recommendations to BCA's general membership at the next meeting on May 26, 2004. At that time, the membership will vote on which plan to support (if either) and the landscaping easement. ■

Why Join BCA?

To have a say in decisions affecting our neighborhood? To be a good citizen? To get a new sidewalk, streetlights, or other improvements for your block? While all of these answers are good, the most compelling reason to join BCA is strength in numbers.

The County Board gives significant consideration to a civic association's input when making decisions. And, the more people who join our civic association, the more power we have to influence County government where neighborhood and local issues are concerned.

Moreover, problems and issues that might seem insurmountable to us, as individuals, are much easier to address with group support. In fact, through the hard work of dedicated members, BCA has made several important strides in recent years. For example, NC Representative Kate Mesches' efforts have pushed BCA's NC projects to the top of the funding list on many occasions (and she worked very hard to get the speed humps installed on North Harrison Street). Wilson Boulevard Working Group Chair Bob Waffle was instrumental in getting the speed limit lowered and the speed-activated light installed on Wilson Boulevard. Ed Fendley is spearheading the effort to have Wilson Boulevard selected as the ATM pilot project, which would likely

provide funding for much-needed sidewalk improvements and other traffic-calming and pedestrian-safety measures.

It takes citizen involvement to make government work appropriately and effectively. Membership in BCA is a great way to make a difference. Encourage your neighbors to become BCA members, particularly those who are new to the neighborhood. Dues as of June 1 are only \$7 for the balance of this year. They can be mailed to Bluemont Civic Association, P.O. Box 5134, Arlington, VA 22205. Or, people can bring checks to any BCA meeting. ■

Neighborhood Day News

BCA sponsored Bluemont's Neighborhood Day activities on Saturday, May 8. On behalf of the Executive Board, I want to thank everyone who stopped by "The Rocks" to enjoy hot dogs and hamburgers. Last year, we received a generous donation from the neighborhood Safeway for hot dogs, buns, and sodas. This year, Safeway was kind enough to donate hot dogs and all the buns for the franks and burgers. A well-deserved round of thanks go to all our volunteers, but particularly to the following BCA members without whom Neighborhood Day would not have been possible: Judy Collins and family; Kate Mesches for coordinating the tree giveaways and "Drive 25 MPH" signs; Peter Petrenello; our barbecue grill masters Lou Martin, Marc Fels, and his young assistant Victor Fels; and Bob Atkins and Ruth and Alice Massie for representing Bluemont as parade marshals at the Neighborhood Day Parade. See everyone next year! —Judah ■

Amendments/Updates to BCA's NC Plan

The BCA Neighborhood Conservation Plan (NC) Update Committee has made its recommendations for updating the 1999 Bluemont Neighborhood Conservation Plan, and BCA members will be asked at the June annual meeting on June 16, 2004, to vote on a motion to request the Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee (NCAC) to amend Appendix A of the plan as follows (amendments are shown in **bold-face** type).

"A12. Frederick Street between its dead end at Interstate 66 and Wilson Boulevard; 9th Street between Frederick and Edison; 8th Road between Greenbrier and Edison streets; **Edison Street between its dead end at Fairfax Drive and Wilson Boulevard;**

Design recommendations. The County should construct sidewalks as follows: Frederick Street, both sides where missing between its dead end at Interstate 66 and Wilson Boulevard; 9th Street, south side between Frederick and Edison streets (curbs only to be built on north side); 8th Road, both sides where missing between Greenbrier and Edison streets; **Edi-**

son Street west side where missing between its dead end at Fairfax Drive and Wilson Boulevard."

"At the following locations, nighttime lighting should be installed or improved....

A22. Frederick Street between its dead end at Interstate 66 and Wilson Boulevard; 9th Street between Frederick and Edison Streets; **8th Road between Frederick and Edison Streets."**

"A28. Pedestrian lighting for all NC sidewalk project areas described in A1 through A13."

If you have any questions regarding these amendments, please contact BCA's NC representative and NC Plan Update Committee Chair Kate Mesches at 703-525-8262 or mesches@aol.com

BCA Calendar
Unless otherwise noted, all meetings are held at 7:00 p.m. at Arlington Traditional School, 855 N. Edison Street
•General Membership meeting, 5/26
•Executive Board meeting, 6/8
•Annual Membership meeting, 6/16



Bluemont Civic Association

Post Office Box 5134
Arlington, VA 22205

BCA Officers

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| President
jdalcais@comcast.net | Judah Dal Cais
528-1551 |
| First Vice President
martin@nerdvana.fu.com | Lou Martin
243-1991 |
| Second Vice President
ttwrec@aol.com | Talmadge Williams
522-5575 |
| Neighborhood Conservation
mesches@aol.com | Kate Mesches
525-8262 |
| Secretary | Vacant |
| Treasurer
Jc.swings@verizon.net | Judy Collins
276-0124 |

BCA Committee Chairs and Representatives

- | | |
|--|-------------------|
| Webmaster | Carla Cathey |
| Newsletter Editor | Suzanne Sundburg |
| Newsletter Layout | Carl Hallinan |
| Newsletter Distribution | Judy Collins |
| Wilson Boulevard Safety | Bob Waffle |
| Wilson Boulevard Revitalization | Judah Dal Cais |
| Ballston Partnership | Talmadge Williams |
| Metro Liaison | Henry McFarland |

Civic Federation Representatives

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| Delegates | Alternates |
| Bob Atkins | Adrienne Pilot |
| Ed Fendley | Ellen Armbruster |
| Talmadge Williams | Judah Dal Cais |
| Bob Waffle | Dan Laredo |