

BCA News

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Jefferson Traffic Calming Awaits Block

In August, Arlington County informed BCA that the section of North Jefferson Street between 5th Street and Wilson Blvd. has met the criteria for traffic calming consideration. Many area residents are concerned that the heavy traffic on Jefferson Street will worsen once traffic calming on Kensington is completed by December.

Although Jefferson Street is eligible for traffic calming (according to a formula used by Arlington County traffic engineers), the blocks will not automatically receive it. Traffic calming is implemented only after residents have gone through a process overseen by the Neighborhood Traffic Calming Committee (NTCC). This process includes neighbor outreach, discussions with County engineers to determine the best type of calming measures, and a petition to determine support for the proposed changes.

The process, while not complicated, does require neighbor involvement. County staff requires that a resident of the impacted area serve as a block cap-

tain to help organize and guide the project through the process. Anyone who lives on an adjacent street may also serve as the block captain. As of yet, no one has volunteered to spearhead the effort. The project will be passed over if no one is willing to serve.

For questions about traffic calming and how the NTCC works, residents may call Betty Diggs in Arlington County's Division of Transportation at 703-228-3202 or ediggs@co.arlington.va.us. Bluemont's NC representative Kate Mesches and alternate representative Margot Thomas also can provide insight into the NTCC process. Call Kate at 703-525-8262 or Margot at 703-276-0345 ext. 227 (office) or 703-527-3838 (home). ■

Bluemont Schools Redistricting Proposed

During the coming year, the Arlington County School Board will vote to move some students from the County's over-capacity elementary schools to utilize new and existing space at under-capacity schools, thereby saving money in the construction budget. This redistribution will affect students in Bluemont who attend Ashlawn and McKinley Elementary, as well as other North Arlington schools.

In Bluemont, McKinley is over capacity and Ashlawn has space available. In neighboring areas, for example, Barrett and Glebe also are under capacity. Therefore, the School Board has directed the Superintendent to have staff develop—with community review and engagement—recommendations on "boundary/enrollment adjustments." Our neighborhood schools as well as others in North Arlington will be directly affected by these adjustments.

This summer, staff held two study sessions with PTA presidents from all of the schools. At the sessions, they discussed the issue of overcrowding and possible solutions in order to better match building capacity with enrollment (any changes would go into effect in September 2005). Based upon those discussions, staff will develop, within guidelines and criteria established by the School Board, a series of options on boundary/enrollment adjustments to schools. ■

Bluemont Sidewalk Project Updates

Washington Blvd. (Jefferson St. to Frederick St.) – Transportation Division Staff has met with VDOT on this project and is in the process of preparing the permit application. Staff will obtain temporary construction easements from 4 property owners in the project area. If any property owners do not sign the easement, the construction work will still proceed, but those properties will not be graded or landscaped.

10th St. (George Mason Dr. to Frederick St.) – Contractors began construction on this project on August 23 and are 95 percent complete. Most of the concrete work has been completed, with the exception one a short section of curb and gutter that will have to wait until utility poles are relocated by Dominion Virginia Power. DVP has not set a date to move the poles. In the mean time, the road will be repaved. Once DVP completes their work, the County will come back to complete the work.

Kensington St. (5th St. to 8th Rd.) – Transportation Division staff are perform the water-main replacement work rather than waiting for the contractor to be available. Construction began on September 3. Water-main work will be followed by sidewalks, repaving and traffic calming, to be completed by mid-November.

Harrison St. (Wilson Blvd. to Washington Blvd.) – The 90 percent design meeting is scheduled for September 14. Upon block approval of 90 percent design, Transportation Division staff will ask VDOT to assess the requested changes to the I-66 overpass.

5th St. and Frederick St. (Greenbrier St. to Carlin Springs Rd.) – The plan is currently being revised by a contractor. Once the revisions are received, the 50 percent meeting will be scheduled.

7th St. and Buchanan St. (Albemarle St. to Wilson Blvd.) – Project is funded, and has been sent to a contractor for survey work.

Carlin Springs Rd. (Abington St. to George Mason Dr.) – Survey work has been completed. This project

has been reassigned to a new internal design team to help move the design process more quickly.

Wilson Blvd. (George Mason to Greenbrier) – Project was earmarked for sidewalks and medians several years ago, but now has been designated as an Arterial Transportation Management (ATM) project. Survey was completed and preliminary design came out of ATM. No update on when detailed design will begin.

Washington Blvd. (nubs at Patrick Henry) – This project is the first priority for the construction contractor who plans to add crews for Arlington projects in order to move more quickly. Construction on this project began on August 11 and the project is approximately 60 percent complete. The contractor has completed 3 of the 5 nubs and is currently awaiting the delivery of storm structure materials that will be used to manage the drainage at the location of the two additional nubs. ■

Wilson Blvd. Improvements Gain Support

The recommendations (including improvements to Wilson Boulevard to be made as soon as next year) of the Arterial Transportation Management (ATM) Task Force were adopted at the Transportation Commission meeting last month. The adopted recommendations also included a number of pedestrian safety improvements along South Four-Mile Run Drive, and the task force urged the County and Arlington County Public Schools to work cooperatively to address a number of safety concerns at the newly renovated Kenmore Middle School.

Bluemont Civic Association (BCA) representatives will work with County Transportation Department staff over the next few months to develop engineering designs and plans with an eye toward possible construction as early as next spring. BCA members will be closely consulted and kept fully informed during this process. Actual construction will be contingent on voter approval of the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) bonds on the ballot this November. ■



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Sunday 8 am - 9 pm

W & OD Trail Tree-Clearing Update

Members of the Arlington community continue to work with Arlington Parks Department staff through the Urban Forestry Commission (UFC) to repair the damage done by Dominion Virginia Power (DVP) last November, when the utility company cut down virtually every tree within 100 feet of the trail. They are also working to revise the terms of the easement to prevent such damage in the future. To this end, Parks Department and the UFC are working to develop higher-level contacts within DVP management.

Parks Department is also working to control invasive weeds that have moved in due to the loss of tree canopy. The UFC is also working with members of the community to develop a natural resource management plan for Four Mile Run, which runs along the trail. The UFC has established a web page and list serve to keep us informed on the issue. To see all the posting or join the list serve, go to http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Transmission_Line_Stewards/. Recently, citizens in Fairfax and Loudon Counties have created another web site <http://www.savethetrail.com> as DVP has extended their cutting into those counties.

Who Will Lead the Halloween Parade?

Time is running out for the planning of our annual Halloween parade—which we would like to hold on Sunday, October 31, 2004. BCA member Gerry Procanick has graciously served as the parade's planner-in-chief and marshal for several years. He cannot lead the parade this year (however he can provide step-by-step planning notes and instructions on how to organize the parade), and we need a volunteer to manage the project and serve as the parade marshal. No special skills or experience are necessary. We simply need someone to commit a modest amount of time to this short-term project. For details, please contact BCA President Judah dal Cais at jdalcaise@comcast.net or 703-528-1551. ■

Civic Federation to Review Bonds

On Tuesday, October 5, 2004, at 7:30 pm, the Arlington County Civic Federation will review the two pro-

posed state constitutional amendments and the four County bonds issues that will appear on the November 2, 2004, election ballot. This meeting will be held in the Hazel Auditorium of the Virginia Hospital Center (formerly Arlington Hospital). Each item will be explained, speakers for and against the items will be heard, and the Federation will vote to support or oppose the six items. Members of the public are welcome to attend, but only member organization delegates and alternates may ask questions.

The first proposed constitutional amendment provides for additional successors to fill the office of Governor in case of an emergency or enemy attack until the General Assembly can act. The second proposed constitutional amendment clarifies how census redistricting affects existing terms of office and vacancies during that term for the U.S. House, the Virginia Senate, and the Virginia House of Delegates.

The proposed bond issues total \$207.9 million: \$78.1 million for schools, \$75.4 million for parks and recreation, \$35.9 million for transportation and community infrastructure, and \$18.5 million for Metro. ■

Go Nuts with Your Neighbors

Have you heard of "Growing Native?" It's a program that helps people make the important connection between healthy, forested lands and clean waters. Every fall, thousands of volunteers collect native tree seeds like acorns and walnuts. These seeds are donated to state nurseries, where they are grown into seedlings. In the spring, volunteers plant the seedlings (that were grown from seeds collected two to three years before) near local waterways. Over the long term, the newly planted trees will improve air and water quality and wildlife habitat throughout the Potomac River and Chesapeake Bay watersheds, thereby enhancing the region's quality of life.

This fall, Erin Monaghan (a Bluemont resident) has volunteered to coordinate Bluemont's participation in Growing Native, beginning on September 12. Acorns (oak tree seeds) and walnuts are common in

(Continued on page 4)



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(Continued from page 3)

our neighborhood, and these are the seeds the forestry services most want to receive! Growing Native is also interested in seeds for other native hardwood trees—ash, hazelnut, pawpaw, persimmon and sassafras are all on the “preferred” list. It’s easy to gather seeds while you are out walking, doing yard work, or playing after school. Seeds need to be kept cool and dry, so they don’t begin to sprout before they get to the nurseries; brown paper bags work just fine, but plastic bags will let the seeds heat up and retain moisture. Each different kind of seed should be kept separately, so if you gather acorns from two different kinds of oak trees, please use two different bags. Then, all you have to do is bring the seeds to Erin’s house at 5259 N. 5th Street—she will have a (squirrel-resistant) place for you to leave them set up on her front porch, and a log book where you can write your name, what kind (s) of seeds you’re contributing, and where you collected them.

If you want to learn more, you can visit Growing Native’s own Web site at www.growingnative.org, or come by Erin’s house on Sunday, September 12 (National Neighborhood Day) between 2:00 and 4:00 pm. Let’s go nuts!

I-66 Westbound Widening Study Update

As you may already know, state transportation officials are conducting a study (costing up to \$1 million) to help them decide whether to widen I-66 to three lanes inside the Beltway (westbound only) or to use alternative approaches to the I-66 corridor transportation problem. This initial study will not provide specific recommendations and will not include a review of the environmental impact. The study is being co-chaired by Bill Cutler of VDOT and Vince Mammano, the Federal Highway Division Administration.

Project Manager Theresa Defore (703-383-2150/ e-mail: Theresa.defore@vdot.org) in the Northern Virginia office of the Virginia Department of Transportation is still setting up the process, which will include the following:

1. **Public Input:** The public input sessions in Arlington and Falls Church will start in October. (These sessions haven’t been named yet.). The community involvement plan is not finalized.
2. **Web Site, Etc.:** The Web site launch was scheduled for early Sept. This site should provide information to the public and allowing the public to give input/ask questions.
3. **Concept Alternatives:** The study will initially review four concept alternatives—no build, transit alternatives, high occupancy vehicle (HOV) and high occupancy toll (HOT) lanes, and widening I-66 westbound (in the existing footprint of the highway). The transit alternatives include rapid bus transit, adding a rail line, etc. With respect to the “no build” alternative, one example would be the enhancement of telecommuting.
4. **Public Input On Concepts/Criteria:** The initial four broad concepts will be presented along with criteria that can be measured—these concepts are to be presented in the fall. The public will be able to suggest additional concepts and measurement criteria.
5. **Study But No Recommendations:** The study should conclude in March. However, the study will not include recommendations. The co-chairs will pass the research results along to the Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board which may, in turn, call for further studies, such as a study to determine compliance with the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA).

According to Ms. Defore, all the stakeholders (not just politicians), including communities, civic associations and businesses, will be allowed to have input. BCA will continue to report information as it becomes available. ■

Schools Back in Session

Now that Arlington County Public Schools have begun classes, please be careful while driving through Bluemont. Children will be walking to school, waiting at bus stops, and getting on and off school buses. Pay close attention to school-zone speed limits (when flashing), school crosswalks, safety patrols and crossing guards. Remember that it is illegal to

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pass in either direction when a school bus is stopped and its lights are flashing. Take extra precautions especially during the first few weeks while kids are still getting back into the habit of remembering safety rules. ■

McKinley Elem. Gets Jump on New Year

Bluemont's McKinley Elementary School is going to have a jam-packed September. One of this year's main fundraisers, the Sally Foster Gift-wrap Sale, starts this month so find any McKinley student and stock up on supplies now for the rest of the year. The Scholastic Bookfair will run from Monday, September 27 through Friday, October 1. School families and the Bluemont neighborhood are always welcome to participate in all school events. For more information, please call the school at 703-228-5280 or visit online at www.arlington.k12.va.us/schools/mckinley. ■

Potomac Harmony Chorus Vaudeville Show

The Potomac Harmony Chorus, the 2004 Region 14 Champions of Sweet Adelines International, presents "The Really Big Razzamatazz Vaudeville Show" at 3:00 pm on Saturday October 16 at the Thomas Jefferson Theater located at 125 South Old Glebe Road in Arlington, VA. This show is a fundraiser for the Chorus's trip to New Orleans for next year's international competition.

The audience will be treated to a collection of songs, jokes, tricks, juggling and acrobatics, all in the spirit of a vaudeville variety show, with fun and laughs for the whole family. The music of this women's chorus covers the gamut: beautiful bal-

lads, jazz standards, Broadway show tunes, and rock and roll, all sung a cappella in four-part harmony, barbershop style. Tickets are \$15.00 for adults and \$12 for seniors and children. For more information please call 703-764-3896, visit <http://www.potomacharmony.org>, or send an e-mail to potomacharmony@yahoo.com.

Ingrid Morroy To Speak at January Meeting

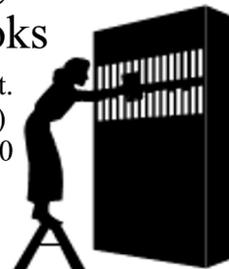
Please help us welcome the Arlington County Commissioner of Revenue, Ingrid Morroy, who will speak at the BCA general membership meeting on Wednesday, January 26, 2005.

Ms. Morroy plans to present a general overview of the new initiatives that she implemented in the Commissioner's office in 2004, and the effect these initiatives have had on Arlingtonians. In addition, she plans to highlight 1) vehicle tax issues such as enforcement and the new DMV satellite office and 2) the Commissioner's support for businesses and

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Delegates	Alternates
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Ed Fendley	Ellen Armbruster
Talmadge Williams	Judah Dal Cais
Bob Waffle	Dan Laredo

BCA Calendar

CORRECTION

Please note that the date of the first BCA general membership will be Wednesday, September 22, 7 pm, at Arlington Traditional School. (The wrong date was reported in the August e-list message. We apologize for any confusion.)

Unless otherwise noted, all meetings are held at 7:00 p.m. at Arlington Traditional School, 855 N. Edison Street

- **Executive Board meeting, 9/14, 7 pm, ATS**
- **General Membership meeting, 9/22, 7 pm, ATS**
- **Executive Board meeting, 10/12, 7 pm, ATS**
- **General Membership meeting, 10/27, 7 pm, ATS**



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Won't You Please Join Us?

The Bluemont Civic Association is the only organization working exclusively on behalf of you and all Bluemont residents. We are your friends and neighbors, striving to make our streets safe for our children and other pedestrians, enhance our parks and preserve our environment, protect property values and build a stronger sense of community. Among our activities and recent accomplishments are:

- Dedicated turn lanes on Wilson Boulevard at George Mason Drive;
- Traffic calming projects on Vermont and Harrison Streets (completed); and Kensington and Abingdon Streets (funded);
- Funded sidewalk projects on Washington Boulevard and Kensington, 5th, Frederick, 7th, Harrison and 10th Streets;
- An active campaign to make the Wilson Boulevard commercial area more attractive and community-oriented;
- Organization of events such as the annual Halloween Parade and Arlington Candidates Night;
- Coordination with County officials on police, school, development, park and code enforcement issues.

By becoming a member, you will receive a newsletter each month that will keep you informed about issues that affect you and your family and provide the funding needed to continue our important work on your behalf. Membership is only one dollar per month. Please take a moment now to become a member by to completing the form below and returning it with a check for \$9.00 (for a membership through the end of 2004), payable to Bluemont Civic Association, P.O. Box 5134, Arlington, VA 22205.

BCA Membership Form

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City, state, zip _____

Phone _____

E-mail address (for news on urgent issues) _____