



# neighborhood news

of the Bluemont Civic Association

December 2014

[www.bluemontcivic.org](http://www.bluemontcivic.org)

## Mark Your Calendars

**12/17 BCA Meetings (Executive & General) 7/7:30 pm, ATS**

1/10 Invasive Plant Removal 9 am-11 am, Bluemont Park Tennis Court Parking Lot

1/17 Sidewalk Safety Task Force 8 am Two Chefs Restaurant

Early January-Public Meeting No. 2 on Ballston Metro Station Multi-modal Improvements

**1/26 (MONDAY) BCA Meetings (Executive and General) 7/7:30 pm, ATS**

February, Community Open House No. 2 for Wilson Blvd. Improvements

**2/25 BCA Meetings (Executive and General) 7/7:30 pm, ATS**

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## Next Meeting: December 17, 2014

### 7 pm Executive Board/7:30 pm General Membership

The next Executive Board and general membership meetings will be on December 17, 2014 at Arlington Tradition School, 855 N. Edison Street, Arlington, VA 22205. The Executive Board meeting will start at 7:00 pm. All members in good standing are welcome to attend. The general membership meeting will start at 7:30 pm.

The proposed Retail Plan for the county will be discussed during the meeting. County Manager Barbara Donnellan remarked that this is some significant change in practice and policy. "The proposed Retail Plan will be used by staff, commissions and the County Board as they analyze special exception projects as to the type of retail envisioned for the project site, how the spaces within the project will best accommodate retail and how the public realm should be designed and managed." The proposed plan designates many streets for retail sales and for food and drinking establishments only but is more restrictive of personal services, such as banks and healthcare services. (State law requires establishments that serve alcoholic beverages to also sell food.) The latest version indicates that there should be only retail sales and food and drinking establishments for one block south of Wilson Boulevard on N. Glebe Road and that the remainder of N. Glebe Road to Henderson Road can be all types of retail. No non-retail uses, e.g., houses of worship and community spaces, are indicated in designated retail areas. The plan is advertised for hearing by the County Board in February 2015. Read more about it at <http://www.arlingtonvirginiausa.com/about-aed/major-initiatives/retail-policies/>

The agenda will also include guest speaker Mark Schnauffer, project manager from the Arlington County Transportation Department, who will present plans to improve the Ballston-Marymount University Metro plaza as well as curb use and traffic flow on surrounding streets. And, the Bluemont Village Center Task Force will presents its final report. The complete agenda will be published about a week before the meeting.

The BCA will also be collecting food donations for the Arlington Food Assistance Center (AFAC). All donations will be taken to the AFAC.

## October and November Meeting Recap

At the October 2014 general membership meeting, Mr. John Moore, the general manager for the Ballston Common Mall, and his team from Forest City Enterprises presented a vision for transforming the mall into a vibrant urban mixed-use district with "great place-making". That includes opening the center of the mall up to the daylight and constructing a tower with 2 floors of retail and 383 apartment units,

(Continued on page 2)

including studio and 1- and 2-bedroom floor plans, at the corner of N. Randolph St. and Wilson Blvd. The strategy calls for creating street-fronts for the stores along Wilson Blvd, increasing food and beverage to 25% of gross leasable area, and attracting local and unique retailers.

In November, the Executive Board met on a range of topics. One discussion was about bringing back online payment for membership dues. Many members prefer to renew their memberships online. But, at the present time, it would be too difficult and costly to establish and maintain the required legal arrangements, so members will be asked to continue to come to meetings or to send checks by mail to pay their membership dues. Other discussions included the impacts on the Bluemont area of the upcoming changes to the Ballston-Marymount University Metro station, to the county's ground floor retail plan, and to the boundaries of the northern elementary schools of Arlington Public Schools.

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## **Ballston-MU Metro Station Multimodal Improvements**

The current Ballston-MU Metro station is due for big improvements. Arlington County Transportation Department held two meetings this fall to present ideas for improving multimodal access to the station and to get comments. BCA members attended both of them. Plans call for making the area safer and more accessible for bus, taxi, and, space permitting, shuttle and private vehicle passengers as well as for walkers and cyclists. Concepts include adding more bus bays and bicycle parking, relocating taxi waiting areas and sidewalk vendors, and creating an eating and entertainment area. Sidewalk structures will be relocated and modernized to give businesses more visibility, pedestrian more direct and level pathways, and bus

passengers more seating and shelter. The priority for planners is mass transit, so these changes could result in fewer on-street parking spaces for private vehicles and food trucks. Read more about this \$5 million project at <http://projects.arlingtonva.us/projects/ballston-station-multimodal/>

Planning is scheduled to continue through September 2015, and construction is expected to start in early 2016. The last public meeting is planned for early January. Come to the December 17 BCA general membership meeting to be a part of the discussion to promote amenities that would benefit the Bluemont area. Mark Schnauer, project manager from the county, will present the latest plans.

## **Newsletter Editor Wanted**

Neighborhood News is in transition while we search for another newsletter editor or editors to help us write, edit, and produce this newsletter. If you are or you know someone who is interested in volunteering to write and edit our newsletter, please contact [exec@bluemontcivic.org](mailto:exec@bluemontcivic.org).

## **Arlington County Civic Federation November Recap**

On November 11, the Arlington County Civic Federation (ACCF) held a forum on the Public Land for Public Good (PL4PG) initiative. County Board member Mary Hynes, ACCF Parks & Rec Committee Co-chair Mark Antell, ACCF Housing Committee member Mary Rouleau, ACCF Schools Committee Chair Michael Beer, ACCF Public Services Committee Chair Jackie Snelling, and ACCF Planning and Zoning Committee Co-chair Martha Moore all presented various perspectives.

The county ran an on-line survey to accept comments on the draft guidelines. Over 530 comments and dozens of letter, including some from the BCA, were submitted. The Arlington County Long Range Planning Committee will review all public feedback and make a report to the Planning Commission and County Board at their December 2014 hearings. To speak during the public comment period for County Board meetings, visit <http://countyboard.arlingtonva.us/meetings>. Written comments may be sent in advance to the County Board via [countyboard@arlingtonva.us](mailto:countyboard@arlingtonva.us). For more details, please visit <http://www.civfed.org/>.

## **BCA Sponsors Food Drive**

Once again, BCA is pleased to participate in the Arlington Food Assistance Center holiday food drive. BCA also encourages neighbors to participate at our local Safeway's drive, which also benefits AFAC. Participate in any way that is convenient to you.

You also may drop off a nonperishable food donation through December 17 on the front porch of BCA vice president K. Mattos, located at 5310 N. Bluemont Drive. Thanks for your AFAC donation, and Happy Holidays.

## **Wilson Boulevard Improvements Advance**

Residents of Bluemont and adjacent neighborhoods heard updates and provided input on the county's plans to restripe Wilson Boulevard this spring, the first step in an effort to improve sidewalks and safety for all users.

At a November 20 open house meeting, a 10-person team from the Arlington County Transportation Department shared details and solicited feedback on the improvements. County plans include a roadway reconfiguration in April, bus stop consolidations, and options for a subsequent project phase involving the widening and improvement of sidewalks. The initial project area extends along Wilson Boulevard from Frederick Street to Manchester Street. The reconfiguration will convert the roadway to include one general travel lane in each direction, a new two-way center turn lane, and bicycle lanes.

BCA representatives have welcomed the county's plans, noting the BCA's longstanding support for improving Wilson Boulevard's sidewalks so that they meet ADA and county safety standards.

Report-outs from discussion tables at the open house indicated that residents provided a number of supportive comments and constructive suggestions for improvements to the plan. County staff indicated they will continue to refine the plan, taking into account feedback from residents. A second community meeting will be scheduled in or around February. Read more at <http://projects.arlingtonva.us/projects/wilson-boulevard-improvements/>

Bluemont residents are welcomed to participate in the ongoing efforts of the BCA Sidewalk Safety Task Force. For further info, contact Chris Healey and Ed Fendley at [sidewalksafetytaskforce@bluemontcivic.org](mailto:sidewalksafetytaskforce@bluemontcivic.org)

## **Ashlawn School Safe Routes Projects**

On October 22, 2014, the Arlington County Division of Transportation presented its latest plans for improving pedestrian traffic around Ashlawn Elementary Schools. Having incorporated comments from the first meeting that the county held in July, most aspects of the updated plan were met with approval. The connection of the Bluemont Junction Trail with N Manchester St remained the only part of the plan that was still not completely satisfactory to the meeting's attendees.

The slides that William Roberts, Transportation Program Manager for the county, presented at the meeting are at <http://www.bluemontcivic.org/docs/10-22-14%20Ashlawn%20Pedestrian%20Improvements.pdf>

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## Join the BCA or Renew Your Membership Today!

Most BCA memberships will lapse on December 31, 2014. To check on the status of your particular membership look at your newsletter's address label for the membership expiration date.

As a current member, you don't need to be reminded of the benefits of membership such as a mailed monthly newsletter (Sept.–June), the ability to participate fully at BCA meetings and to vote for the leadership team and on matters of concern to you.

To renew your membership, fill out the membership form and pay \$15 dues by check or cash in person at the December 17th general membership meeting or by check via our USPS post office box to keep your membership current. Please do not send cash into the mail. Note that dues are no longer prorated. So the sooner you pay, the more benefits you enjoy!

# RENEW TODAY!

Keep your membership current through December **2015**.

Please use this form to renew until the online payment option is resumed.

### GO PAPERLESS AND SAVE TREES

- Members may elect to receive BCA Neighborhood News electronically rather than by mail by simply checking this box. Be sure to provide your e-mail address! (All information is for BCA use only.)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

- Bring this form and cash or check for \$15 to renew at the December 17 general membership meeting at Arlington Traditional School, or
- Mail this form with our check to the Bluemont Civic Association at BCA Treasurer, PO Box 5134, Arlington, VA 22205



**Bluemont Civic Association**  
**PO Box 5134**  
**Arlington, VA 22205**  
**BluemontCivic.org**