



neighborhood news

of the Bluemont Civic Association

September 2014

www.bluemontcivic.org

Mark Your Calendar

9/30 BCA Meetings (Executive & General) 7/7:30 pm, ATS

10/4 Free Tree Distribution, 8 am, 4240 S. Four Mile Run Dr. (register at <http://environment.arlingtonva.us/trees/plant-trees/tree-distribution-program/>)

10/13 Columbus Day Bell Ringing, 12 pm, Constitution Garden Park

10/22 BCA Meetings (Executive & General) 7/7:30 pm, ATS

10/31 Halloween Parade, time is TBD, Bluemont Junction Trail at N. Emerson Street

11/8 Invasive Plant Removal, 9 am–11am, Bluemont Park Tennis Court Parking Lot

11/15 Sidewalk Safety Task Force 8 am, Two Chefs Restaurant

11/19 BCA Meetings (Executive & General) 7/7:30 pm, ATS (Tentative)

In This Issue

Annual Meeting Election Results	2
Summertime Meeting Recap	2
Ashlawn Pedestrian Improvements	3
Public Land for Public Good	4
CivFed Candidates Forum Recap	4
Ground Floor Retail Policy Changes	4
672 Flats Development Proposal	5
McKinley Elementary Addition	5
Invasive Plant Removal Work Party	5
Yard-Waste Collection On Hold	5
Voter ID Required to Vote	6

NEXT MEETING: Tues., Sept. 30

Please join us on Tues., 9/30, at Arlington Traditional School (ATS), 855 N. Edison Street. The Executive Board and general membership meetings will begin at their regular 7/7:30 pm times. We have invited the county’s Director of Management and Finance to discuss the upcoming \$220 million bond referenda that will be on the November ballot. See <http://budget.arlingtonva.us/bond-referenda/> to review language for the four items: Metro & Transportation, Local Parks & Recreation, Community Infrastructure (Neighborhood Conservation), and Arlington Public Schools.

Also, Alison Sheahan, an Arlington County Master Naturalist, will be on hand to speak to the membership about invasive plant removal, and our new police liaison, Officer César Ruiz, has also been invited to present summer statistics, discuss trends, and answer questions about public safety in Bluemont. See the related article on page 5.

Our subsequent meeting date is Wed., Oct. 22, 7/7:30 pm, which is tentative pending confirmation from ATS. Art Walsh, a land-use attorney with the firm of Walsh Collucci, will join us to review the plans to renovate and “daylight” Ballston Common Mall and add a 20-story residential apartment tower on the current site of the Macy’s furniture store.

When Do We Meet?

The BCA’s regular meeting date is the third Wednesday of the month. Due to a scheduling conflict at ATS, we moved the September meeting to the last Tuesday of the month. We are in the process of finalizing and confirming dates for the rest of 2014–2015, and all membership meeting dates listed under Mark Your Calendar are tentative. We expect to distribute a neighborhood-wide edition of the newsletter in October.

Newsletter Editor Wanted

Newsletter publication is in transition while we search for another newsletter editor or editors to help us write, edit, and produce the BCA’s *Neighborhood News*.

If you are or you know someone who is interested in volunteering to write and edit our newsletter, please contact exec@bluemontcivic.org.

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Annual Meeting Election Results

Please welcome our new Executive Board members who were elected at the June 25 Annual Meeting:

President Jonn Lau; 1st Vice-President Kate Mattos (VP); 2nd VP Larry Smith; Treasurer David Van Wagner; Secretary George Rovder; Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee (NCAC) Representative Ed Fendley; NCAC Alternate Dayna Davitz; and Civic Federation delegates David Hughes, Dean Foster, and Suzanne Sundburg and alternates Craig Deering, Mark Haynes, and Carla Aly.

We offer a special word of thanks to outgoing President George Rovder; 1st VP Mark Haynes; Treasurer Nancy O'Doherty; Secretary Laura Kirkconnell; NCAC Representative Chris Healey; Civic Federation Delegate Terry Serie and alternates James McMullin and Patrick Bryan for their service to the BCA.

Please note that the BCA Executive Board voted to appoint Larry Smith as one of the BCA's alternate delegates to the Arlington County Civic Federation. There is still an opening for another delegate.

Summertime Recap

Although the BCA does not hold general membership meetings during the vacation season in July and August, the Executive Board and various committees continue to meet and work on behalf of the membership. Below are a few highlights:

July 16—Pres. Jonn Lau, 1st VP Kate Mattos, 2nd VP Larry Smith, and Suzanne Sundburg met with Ballston Business Improvement District (BID) CEO Tina Leone to discuss ways that the BCA could improve communication and coordination with the BID.

July 23—The BCA Executive Board voted to approve a \$20 expenditure for the NCAC's 50th anniversary celebration and planned for the fall meetings. See www.bluemontcivic.org for the meeting minutes.

July 28—The Sidewalk Safety Task Force met with members of the county's transportation division to discuss the findings of the surveys performed for Wilson Boulevard with respect to the BCA's request to reconfigure (restriping the pavement only in phase 1) traffic lanes west of N. Frederick Street with the ultimate long-term goal of making the sidewalks ADA compliant (phase 2). County staff is continuing its work and will share additional details with the community in the coming months.

(Continued on page 3)

Summertime Recap (Cont.)

July 30—The BCA’s representative on Ashlawn’s Building Level Planning Committee (BLPC) attended a community meeting with county staff that focused on pedestrian safety and other proposed transportation-related improvements. (See related article below.)

August 24—The Sidewalk Safety Task Force met with County Board member John Vihstadt to brief him (just as it has the other County Board members) on the BCA’s request to reconfigure Wilson Boulevard west of N. Frederick Street.

August 27—The BCA Executive Board voted to approve reimbursement of \$63 for flowers donated to ATS Elementary School in Dec. 2013 as thanks for school staff’s assistance throughout the year, \$30 for photocopying and mailing costs, and \$150 annually to cover web hosting expenses once the new site comes online. It also planned for the upcoming meetings in Sept. and Oct. and discussed the BCA website and related issues. See www.bluemontcivic.org for draft meeting minutes.

September 9—The Bluemont Village Center Task Force met with The Penrose Group to gather more information on the possibilities for the Safeway site at 5101 Wilson Blvd.

Early September--BCA prompted the County to remove overhanging branches and foliage so that the sidewalk along the park by Carlin Springs Road between the Arlington Forest Club Pool and N. Kensington was open and passable.

Ashlawn Transportation Improvements

On July 30, County transportation officials held a public forum to present proposed concepts for traffic modifications at Ashlawn Elementary School in these areas:

- 8th Road N. & Wilson Blvd.—remove existing blacktop and construct an ADA-compliant ramp, with the possibility of adding stairs
- 5th Street N. & N. Montague Street

- 5th Street N. & N. Manchester Street—construct another pedestrian crossing
- N. Manchester Street—on the east side, widen the sidewalks to 6 feet and connect to Bluemont Park.

The concepts presented did not reflect previous community input and did not align with the findings and recommendations of the Toole Design Group’s report on transportation needs for Ashlawn. Community attendees expressed their concern that the proposed concepts ignored the Toole report and failed to take into account the regarding of the site.

The proposed Manchester and 5th pedestrian crossing and N. Manchester Street connection to Bluemont Park were particularly problematic. The proposed concept for the intersection at N. Montague and 5th Streets ignored the cross-traffic on 5th Street. Community members felt strongly that 5th should be modified with a raised crosswalk.

Dennis Leach, director of the county’s Department of Environmental Services, also attended this meeting and provided some important feedback. County staff ultimately agreed to modify its concepts and bring them back for community review in early October. In the interim, the county will observe the new traffic patterns on the school property. Construction of these projects won’t occur until the summer of 2015.

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Public Land for Public Good

Arlington County staff has analyzed 391 of 678 publicly-owned parcels using criteria such as land area, environmental constraints, transit access and zoning to prioritize sites appropriate for affordable housing or schools. The County is currently developing guidelines that will set goals, evaluation criteria, and a process for determining how to balance public priorities on public lands. You are encouraged to review the guidelines and provide comments by **September 30, 2014**.

The guidelines are to inform the analysis of the sites' feasibility. They do not cover the site selection process. Upcoming sites that could be affected by these guidelines in the spring of 2015 include the North Side Salt Facility, Lubber Run Community Center, and Jennie Dean Park and Adjacent Land. Other sites may be considered in the future.

Visit <http://projects.arlingtonva.us/plans-studies/public-land-site-evaluation/> to review the sites identified, retrieve the draft Public Land Site Evaluation Guidelines, and leave your comments.

Civic Federation Candidates Forum Recap

The Arlington County Civic Federation (ACCF) kicked off the 2014 election season with a candidate forum on Sept. 2. Delegates' names were drawn at random in order to ask questions of the candidates for County Board, School Board, and U.S. House of Representatives. The candidate for County Treasurer is running unopposed. Although all candidates for U.S. Senate were invited, only the Libertarian candidate accepted the ACCF's invitation to the forum.

Volunteers from Arlington Independent Media (AIM) filmed the candidate forum. The video of County Board and School Board candidates may be viewed at <http://youtu.be/lDgkMcTmMwY>.

Video for County Treasurer and the U.S. House and Senate candidates may be viewed at <http://youtu.be/AxKhxRARMKc>.

ACCF delegates will be considering several resolutions at its Oct. and/or Nov. meetings. These include a resolution regarding parkland, green space and recreation facility preservation and another to address the FAA's Navigation Hazard Evaluation rulemaking change that covers the emergency landing flight paths for airliners using Ronald Reagan Washington National airport. For more details, please visit <http://www.civfed.org/>.

County Commercial and Retail Policy

The Economic Development Commission has prepared its third draft of changes to Arlington County's Ground Floor Retail and Commerce policies, guidelines, and action plan. It plans to request informal recommendations from the Arlington County Board and meet with various stakeholder groups before requesting that the County Board adopt the policies. Earlier, these activities were scheduled to be wrapped up by the end of 2014, but the Commission has delayed them for unspecified reasons.

The changes to Ballston include:

- Fairfax Drive & North Stuart Street: "Entertainment/Main Street Retail" to Commerce.
- Retail Node at Fairfax Drive & North Stuart Street intersection.
- North Glebe Road: "Concentration of Large Format Retailers" to Retail between Fairfax Drive & Wilson Boulevard and to Hybrid between Wilson Boulevard & North Henderson Road.
- North Glebe Road: "Neighborhood Streets" to Commerce between Fairfax Drive & 11th Street North.
- North Randolph Street: "Concentration of Large Format Retailers" to Commerce.
- 9th Street North: "Personal and Business Services" to Optional

Other areas will also be affected. Read more about this initiative at <http://www.arlingtonvirginiausa.com/major-initiatives/retail-policies/>.

672 Flats (#25 Glebe) Project Update

The preliminary site plan redevelopment proposal for 672 Flats, also known as #25 Glebe) has been filed with the County.

The Penrose Group has purchased the Prestige Certified Motors and Macy's parking lot parcels in the 600 block of N. Glebe Road (between Carlin Springs Road and 7th Street North. It also has a contract to purchase the Exxon station at 660 N. Glebe Road.

The six-story, 175-unit apartment building, named 672 Flats, will have 4,400 sq ft of ground-floor retail facing Glebe Road. The number of underground parking spaces is yet to be determined.

County Site Plan Review Committee meetings to review the project are expected to be held sometime this fall. We thank the BCA's Glebe 25 Task Force and Task Force Chair Terry Serie, who have been working hard on this project.

With the Saul Group's purchase of the Rosenthal Mazda dealership site and the parcel across 7th Street from 672 Flats, there is the potential for additional redevelopment to occur on the BCA's eastern border.

40,445 Sq. Ft. Addition for McKinley Elementary School

On September 20, the County Board approved the use permit for the new addition to McKinley Elementary School, which will add approximately 241 seats and will increase the number of off-street parking spaces from 36 to 56. The estimated total project cost is \$20.5 million. Staff, parents, and visitors will use street parking when all on-site parking is full.

Much of the final discussion around the permit was to explore ways to save the 32-inch in diameter, "signature" tree that the current parking lot surrounds. Numerous community stakeholder groups and county staff worked vigorously to try to save the tree but did not find an acceptable solution.

Invasive Plant Removal Work Party

Join Arlington County, Arlington Master Naturalists, and Tree Stewards for work parties to enjoy the crisp fall weather, to exercise, to get fresh air, and to help save our centuries-old trees in Bluemont Park.

Every second Saturday of every month starting November 8, and continuing into the summer, work parties will meet in the parking lot at Wilson Blvd and N Manchester St to clear invasive vines and plants behind the caboose. The County will provide some tools, poison ivy protection, and instruction in identification and removal of invasive species.

Everyone ages 15 and up are encouraged to attend and may bring younger children. Wear long-sleeves, long pants, and gloves. Bring loppers and pruners if you have them. If you have any questions, contact Sarah Archer at sarcher@arlingtonva.us or neighbors Alison Sheahan at ab.sheahan@verizon.net and Ann Ulmschneider at aulmsch@msn.com.

Year-Round Yard Waste Collection On Hold

The rollout of the year-round yard waste collection is on hold due to a legal dispute over the award of the contracts for the trash/recycling/yard waste collections. Please continue disposing of yard waste by scheduling a brush pickup, grasscycling, composting on site or placing it in your trash cart.

The fall leaf collection will take place as usual.

Residents are not being charged for the additional yard-waste collection. In July, your quarterly refuse bill should have been lowered \$9 (per quarter) to reflect the deferred implementation of the yard waste collection program. Charges for the new yard-waste collection program will be added to your bill once the program actually begins.

The County will make an announcement when the new start date and schedule becomes available.

Voter ID Required to Vote

Voters will be required to show a photo ID to vote in the upcoming November 4, 2014 general elections. You can obtain a FREE photo ID for voting purposes only at the Office of Voter Registration, 2100 Clarendon Blvd, Suite 320, Arlington, VA 22201 (Hours: 8 am-5 pm M-F), 703-228-3456.

Please visit <http://vote.arlingtonva.us/> for more information about the election. *See the related story on the front page about our guest speakers on September 30, 2014.*



What's Inside This Newsletter?

- **Next Meeting: TUES., Sept. 30 at ATS**
- Summertime Meetings In Review
- Public Land for Public Good Guidelines
- Ground Floor Retail Policy Changes
- McKinley Elementary Addition Approved
- Free Mulch Available
- Annual Meeting Election Results
- Ashlawn Pedestrian Improvements
- CivFed Candidates Forum Video Links
- 672 Flats (Glebe 25) Project Update
- 2nd Saturday Invasive Plant Removal
- Yard-Waste Collection on Hold



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