

Large Turnout for Arlington County Board Walking Town Meeting in Bluemont Neighborhoods

June 18, 2007



Board members address the crowd. From left: Jay Fisette in the dark blue polo shirt, Chairman Paul Ferguson, Vice Chair Walter Tejada, Chris Zimmerman and Barbara Favola

On June 18, the Bluemont Civic Association (BCA) hosted the Arlington County Board for a Walking Town Meeting (WTM). **All Board members** — Paul Ferguson, Walter Tejada, Barbara Favola, Jay Fisette and Chris Zimmerman — participated, as did County Manager Ron Carlee and over a dozen staff members from County departments. The WTM format gives the Board an opportunity to visit informally with residents and learn firsthand about neighborhood issues. Only three civic associations are selected each year for a WTM. **Some 150 BCA residents participated in the WTM**, which started at 6:30 pm and concluded at 8:45 pm.

The WTM started at Fire Station #2 and traveled along Wilson Blvd., adjacent streets, and the Bluemont Junction Bike Trail between N. Abingdon St. and N. Emerson St. Along the way, there were four stops at which residents from throughout Bluemont joined the meeting for a discussion of their neighborhood issues. **The following is a partial list of concerns raised by BCA residents.**

Eastern Bluemont (N. George Mason Dr. to N. Glebe Rd.)

- ◆ Ensure that **future redevelopment west of N. Glebe Rd.** (Peck/Staples, Jordan Manor, Mazda, and Exxon blocks) **will be in harmony** (height, style, and building material) with the existing detached single-family and townhouse neighborhoods along N. Wakefield, N. Woodrow, N. Tazewell, N. Abingdon and N. Vermont Streets.
- ◆ Improve sidewalk safety and convenience on Wilson Blvd.
- ◆ Provide a better pedestrian crossing environment on N. Glebe Rd. intersections.
- ◆ Better manage storm water and invasive species in **Lubber Run** between Wilson Blvd. and N. Carlin Springs Rd.
- ◆ Repair the street in the 800 block of N. Buchanan St.
- ◆ Install storm water management infrastructure, curb and gutter on the 4800 block of 8th Rd. N.
- ◆ In Fields Park, repair park fences and the bike trail and add bathrooms, a shelter, and benches.

Northern Bluemont (north of I-66 to Washington Blvd.)

- ◆ Install storm water management infrastructure on **11th Rd. N.**, between N. Frederick and N. Jefferson Streets.
- ◆ Repair the street surface on 11th Rd. N. between N. Frederick and N. Jefferson Streets.
- ◆ Install a continuation of the sidewalk on the north side of 11th Rd. N. (a safety issue for pedestrians walking to Lacey Woods Park).
- ◆ Update **Lacey Woods Park** facilities.

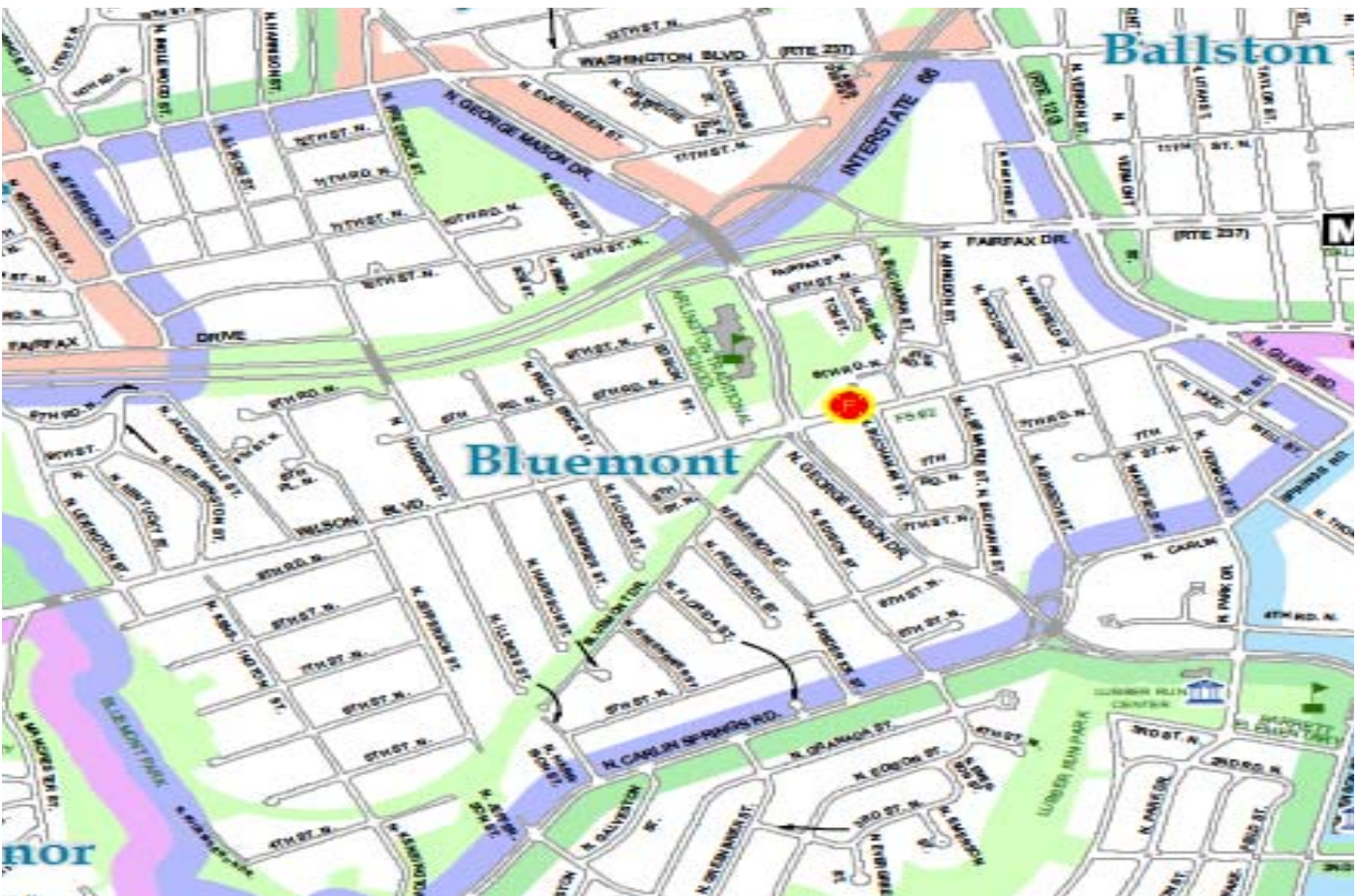
Western and Central Bluemont (From N. George Mason Dr. west to Bluemont and Bon Air Parks)

- ◆ Address **traffic backups** that interfere with cars entering or exiting Wilson Blvd.
- ◆ Address the difficulties with the narrowness of N. Emerson St. between Wilson Blvd. and 6th St. N.
- ◆ Improve **safety** at the Bluemont Junction Trail crossing at N. Emerson St.
- ◆ **Repair broken fences** and add additional trash cans along the Trail.
- ◆ Remove and replace dead trees and shrubs and **improve drainage along the Trail** in area of N. Edison St., particularly the area just south of the gas station and commercial area on Wilson Blvd.
- ◆ Address problem with **sewer backups** into homes during heavy rains.

Wilson Blvd. Street Improvements and Commercial Revitalization

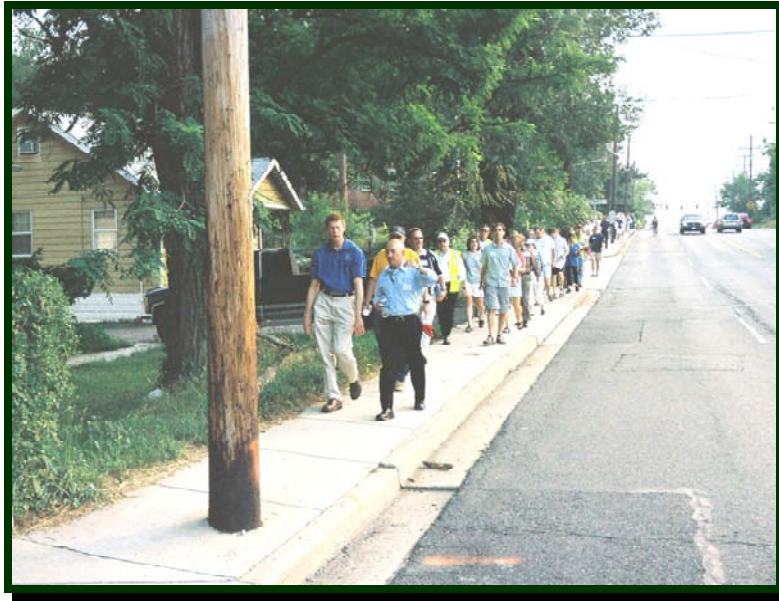
- ♦ BCA thanked the County for the extensive street and intersection improvements in progress between N. George Mason Dr. and N. Frederick St. on Wilson Blvd.
- ♦ BCA asked the Board to continue funding improvements that include pedestrian safety, bike lane(s), and “road diet” designs on Wilson Blvd. west toward the County line.
- ♦ The BCA asked the County to provide planning and funding assistance for the development of a long-term plan to revitalize the commercial blocks on BCA’s “Main Street” — Wilson Blvd.

Your Neighborhood Issues: If you have issues for your street or neighborhood that you want brought to the County's attention, please contact the BCA at bluemontcivic@verizon.net.



WTM Photographs

Walking east toward Ballston on the south side of Wilson Blvd.



Board Chairman, Paul Ferguson (left, dark blue shirt) and Bluemont Civic Association President Judah dal Cais lead the way and prepare to do the “**utility pole shuffle**” that requires pedestrians to walk single file or step onto the curb / street.

Stop #1: On N. Abingdon St. between Wilson Blvd. and N. Carlin Springs Rd.



At this property, participants viewed the **Lubber Run stream** that runs adjacent to properties on N. Abingdon, N. Buchanan, and N. Albemarle Streets between Wilson Blvd. and N. Carlin Springs Rd.



County Board Chairman, Paul Ferguson (next to the fence, dark blue shirt) listens as a homeowner lists problems created by the June 2006 heavy rains, which resulted in **stream bank erosion, flooding and sewage backups** in his home and others on Abingdon and nearby streets abutting Lubber Run between Wilson Blvd. and N. Carlin Springs Rd.



Residents share concerns about **new Ballston area developments in eastern Bluemont** on the west side of N. Glebe Rd.

A large number of eastern Bluemont residents came to this stop to show their concern about **keeping new developments west of N. Glebe Road in harmony** (height, tapering, architectural style, and materials) with the adjacent residential neighborhoods on N. Tazewell, N. Vermont, N. Wakefield, N. Woodrow, and N. Abingdon Streets.



Board member Jay Fisette (left side) and a County staff member visit with residents on the route.

Area traffic concerns include a lack of traffic management at intersections on Wilson Blvd., making it difficult for residents to enter and exit the following neighborhood streets:

- N. Vermont Street
- N. Wakefield Street
- N. Abingdon Street

Wilson Blvd. and N. Abingdon St.



BCA Walking Town Meeting Coordinator Terry Serie halts the town meeting at Wilson Blvd. and N. Abingdon St. to highlight the **10- to 20-foot drop in the terrain** for this area as compared to the nearby Bob Peck and Jordan Manor sites to the east. This drop increases the **negative impact** on the residential neighborhoods of the **large buildings** (10 to 12 stories, up to 165 feet high) proposed for those sites.

Walking west on north side of Wilson Blvd.



Board Member Fisette gets firsthand experience with the “**utility pole shuffle**” on the narrow and obstructed Wilson Blvd. sidewalks that are very **difficult and uncomfortable** for persons with disabilities, children, parents pushing baby strollers, and the elderly.

STOP #2a: Adjacent to Fields Park on 4800 block of 8th Road N.



A property owner displays photos to illustrate **flooding and icing issues** for the many children and the adults who live on 8th Road N., as Board members Walter Tejada (white shirt), Barbara Favola (to the right in the striped top) in front row, Paul Ferguson and Chris Zimmerman (green shirt) in the second row look on.

STOP #2b: In Fields Park adjacent to the bike trail

At this location, residents from the North Bluemont, Lacey Woods Park, and Fields Park neighborhoods joined the WTM to discuss their issues of concern.

Lacey Woods Park neighborhood

Residents show photographs of the **storm water drainage** into yards and home foundations as well as the potholes and large broken sections of 11th Road N. between N. Jefferson and N. Illinois Streets.



County Board Chair Paul Ferguson responds to **concerns about 11th Road N., North Bluemont, Fields Park**, and the surrounding area.

Fields Park concerns included the need for restroom facilities, a picnic shelter, trash and recycling receptacles, park benches, and tree maintenance.

County Manger Ron Carlee (at left, yellow vest) and Board members Barbara Favola and Walter Tejada are in the background.

STOP #3: N. Emerson St. and Bluemont Dr.



WTM participants walk on Bluemont Junction Trail between N. George Mason Dr. and N. Edison St. enroute to N. Emerson St. Along the section, the **need for improved drainage**, replacement of dead trees and bushes, and the removal of brush and branches was observed.



Another large crowd of residents from the **central and western BCA neighborhoods** gathered on the Trail at Bluemont Dr. and N. Edison St. to express their concerns.

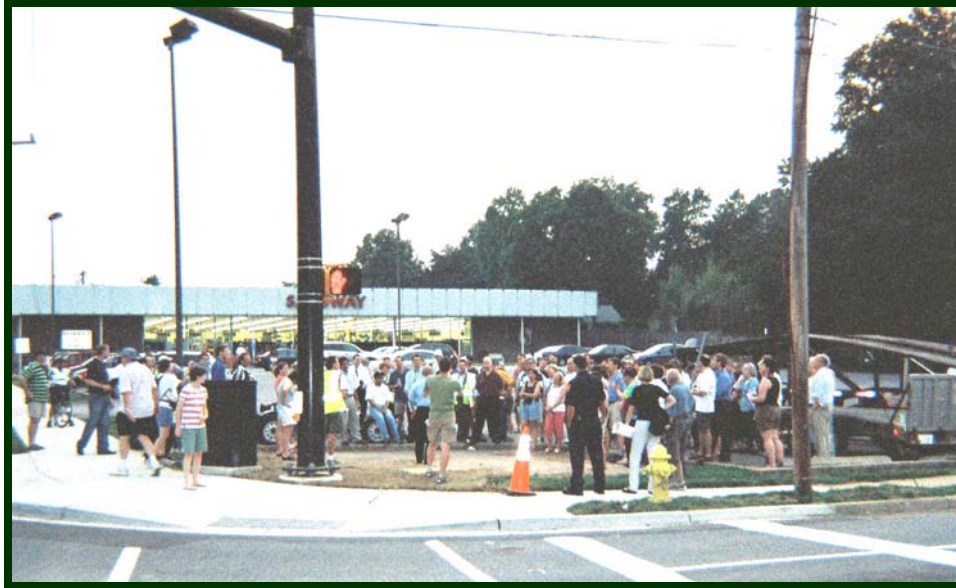


BCA Member Kate Mattos (center, white top) uses a microphone to lead the discussion of how the **streets, park, and nearby areas** might be improved, as County Board members Barbara Favola, Walter Tejada, Chris Zimmerman, and County Manager Ron Carlee (yellow vest) look on.



Residents express their views and highlight the **need for repairs** to the Trail's surface and the broken split rail fences, neighborhood security, sewer and storm water management, traffic calming and other concerns for the **neighborhoods in central and western Bluemont**.

STOP #4: Safeway parking lot at N. Edison St. and Wilson Blvd.



Adjacent residents and BCA officers discuss **future improvements for Wilson Blvd.**, from N. George Mason Dr. west to the Arlington County line, and the long-term revitalization of the Wilson Blvd. commercial district. The BCA is seeking planning and development assistance from the County to improve the commercial vitality of this area.





BCA President Judah dal Cais (holding the microphone) wraps up the Walking Town Meeting by **thanking the County Board members and staff for their comments and participation. The County was also thanked** for the many street and sidewalk improvements made to this area during the past year.

Summary

As a result of this WTM, **the County Board and County Manager's office initiated actions to immediately address** some of the neighborhood concerns in 2007 and scheduled others for action in 2008. Other concerns that have not yet been fully addressed will require ongoing dialogue between the neighborhoods, BCA and County officials.

An update on results on issues raised at the WTM will be posted in early October on the BCA Website at www.bluemontcivic.org

Contact Your County Board Members

	<p>Arlington County Board (left to right)</p> <p>Chris Zimmerman Jay Fisette Barbara Favola Paul Ferguson, Chairman Walter Tejada, Vice Chairman</p>
<p>Communicate your neighborhood concerns or voice your support and appreciation for the county actions mentioned in this report to the County Board members at: </p>	<p>Arlington County Board 2100 Clarendon Blvd. Suite 300 Arlington, VA 22201 E-mail: countyboard@arlingtonva.us. TEL 703-228-3130</p>