

- Lisa Maher, Arlington County Planning Commission Coordinator
- Peck Site update
- Your input & concerns

WHAT'S GOING ON IN THE
NEIGHBORHOOD?

Peck-Staples Plan Update

On 2/26/07, the Peck-Staples Site Plan Review Committee (SPRC) met to identify a framework that will be used to review the land use, zoning and transportation options for the Peck-Staples site plan application. Developer JBG's plan calls for 12-story and 8-story office buildings and 32 4-story townhouses (a plan that is taller and more dense than what could be built by right).

In general, there appeared to be strong support from most of the SPRC members for treating the Peck-Staples block as a "transition" area that would have significantly lower building heights compared to buildings like the Westin Hotel (170 feet) on the east side of N. Glebe Rd. The discussion focused on finding a height within the range of 95 to 135 feet. BCA and some SPRC members suggested a maximum height of around 110 to 115 feet.

There also appeared to be strong support for a significant tapering of the building heights moving westward on the Peck site down to approximately 45 feet at N. Wakefield Street. BCA and other members spoke of the need to also taper building heights at the south end of the site bordering on Wilson Boulevard.

County staff was instructed to study several building site options using the above building heights and tapering options. If these guidelines are followed, building heights would be three to four stories lower than buildings now located on the east side of Glebe Rd.

The timing of the next step(s) in this process is unclear. The County intends to advise the Peck-Staples site plan applicant of the framework options that were discussed. The applicant (JBG) could prepare a new application based on the guidelines or could request a hearing on its original proposal (with the 12-story height), or it could propose to redevelop the site using its by-right option. The by-right option would allow JBG to build on the site up to 45 ➡ 3

Spring Newsletter Outreach

As part of its neighborhood outreach, Bluemont Civic Association (BCA) volunteers hand-distribute the newsletter to all Bluemont residents and businesses twice a year. (Dues-paying members receive monthly newsletters by mail.)

We welcome members, old and new, and we urge you to join us. BCA is an all-volunteer, not-for-profit organization, which has served our community since 1945. We are an independent organization and receive no County funds. Prorated dues paid in March are just \$11, and membership is open to all Bluemont residents.

Becoming a BCA member is quick and easy. Use the mail-in membership form on page 4 of this newsletter or pay in person (by cash or check) at the general meeting on March 28. Want to know more about BCA? Please visit our Web site at www.bluemontcivic.org. ➡ 3



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BCA Neighborhood News



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BCA MEETINGS AT A GLANCE...

LAST GENERAL MEETING, FEBRUARY 28

● **Tejada Visit**— County Board Member Walter Tejada addressed various issues particularly in regard to development.

NEXT GENERAL MEETING, MARCH 28

At Lubber Run Community Center, 200 N. Park Drive, room 203

● **Lisa Maher**, the Planning Commission Coordinator in the Planning Division of Arlington County's Department of Community Planning, Housing and Development, will address issues related to zoning, development and redevelopment, and the site plan review process in Arlington.

NOTE: The April 25 general membership meeting also will be held at Lubber Run Community Center.

When Do We MEET?

Glad you asked! BCA general membership meetings are generally held at 7 pm on the fourth Wednesday of each month, September through June. (In case of holiday conflicts, other dates may be selected). Meeting announcements are printed in the monthly newsletter for members. Details are also available on the BCA Web site at www.bluemontcivic.org. BCA executive board meetings take place on the second Tuesday of each month at 7 pm (all members welcome).

School Boundary Changes?

Arlington Public Schools (APS) will soon be making enrollment/boundary changes with the real possibility that Bluemont students at McKinley and Ashlawn could be moved to other schools. Arlington Traditional School (ATS) lobbied hard to be excused and convinced the Board to protect its admissions policy from any changes. ATS continues to fight a walk-zone preference for Bluemont kids living near the school – once our neighborhood school. Go to www.arlington.k12.va.us, click "more news" then on "Boundaries..." ■

Help for Spring Yard Work

Spring is here, and it's time to work on your lawns, and prep your vegetable/herb gardens!

The association has a tiller available for loan, but in order to use this item your BCA membership must be current.

The Mantis Tiller is an electric, lightweight, quiet, and easy to use tiller, de-thatcher, lawn aerator, planter/furrower, and border/edger. To reserve the Mantis tiller for your lawn and garden, please contact Judah dal Cais at jdalcais@verizon.net. ■



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►Peck-Staple Site FROM P.1

feet in height without site plan approval. To see more details about the Peck-Staples site plan, visit www.bluemontcivic.org. ■

I-66 Widening Update

Contributed by Allen Muchnick, ACST

After issuing a March 2005 feasibility study report (www.idea66.com) that was written to justify adding a westbound lane to I-66, the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) devised a project to build three discontinuous segments of this lane as "interim spot improvements," totaling 4.1 miles in length. Two intervening segments of westbound I-66 would remain only two lanes wide, creating two new bottlenecks.

To minimize environmental documentation and community opposition, the current widening project would be limited to the existing VDOT right-of-way, which includes the Custis Trail and parklike buffers along the north side of the roadway. VDOT has pledged to maintain the Custis Trail's continuity, but some adverse impacts to the Custis Trail are likely. Indeed, these "interim spot improvements" are likely the first step toward adding at least one continuous lane to I-66 in each direction.

Currently, the Arlington Coalition for Sensible Transportation (ACST) has an action alert (www.acstnet.org/alerts.htm) that asks Governor Kaine to direct VDOT to stop this unnecessary, counterproductive, and unwarranted project and instead develop a much-needed comprehensive plan for the I-66 multimodal corridor, using a fair and transparent process that involves all stakeholders and adequately considers all reasonable alternatives to widening. Please take action to demonstrate grassroots opposition to the proposed widening. ■

Zoning Ordinance Changes Approved

On 2/24/07, the County Board again approved the Views at Clarendon site plan (a 10-story project related to the First Baptist Church of Clarendon redevelopment). Last year, the Virginia Supreme Court ruled that the County had violated its own rules in rezoning this site, and the County subsequently proposed changing its rules to circumvent the ruling. Although the Planning Commission and the Civic Federation recommended taking additional time to study the changes, the County Board approved the following at its February 24 ➡ 4

WHAT'S GOING ON IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD? continued

BCA June Elections

BCA is an all-volunteer organization. Our ability to function is based upon your willingness to volunteer. The BCA Nominations Committee is looking for members who would be willing to run/serve as President, First Vice-President, Second Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary, Neighborhood Conservation Action Committee (NCAC) Representative, and Civic Federation delegates and alternates. You need no experience or special skills — just a willingness to spend a few hours each month to help your neighborhood.

For more information on these positions, please contact Nominations Committee Member Bob Atkins at luddite2003@yahoo.com or call 703-527-8859. ■

May 12 Is Neighborhood Day!

Come nibble on picnic fare, get to know your neighbors, and have some old-fashioned fun at our Neighborhood Day picnic on Saturday, May 12 behind Fire Station #2 at Wilson and George Mason. Want to help out? Email jdalcais@verizon.net. ■

Tree Give Away

Also on Neighborhood Day, BCA will distribute free native trees: American fringe (a small flowering tree); and black gum (a medium to large shade tree). The trees are 3'-4' high, provided in gallon containers. Reserve yours by April 2: jdalcais@verizon.net. ■

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JOIN BCA!

Name(s) _____

Address _____

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Email* _____

Comments _____

Please mail this form and your check for \$11 to the address below, or come to our next General meeting on March 28th and join in person!

*for BCA announcements only

Get the Word Out

Do you like to walk? Do you have a few hours a year to spare? Wondering how this newsletter got to your door? If the answer to any of the above is YES, please consider helping out your civic association by volunteering to be a newsletter distributor. The newsletter is distributed to every house in the neighborhood twice a year, and volunteers are needed to cover a route (typically 75 to 100 houses) on a regular basis, and to be substitutes to help out if the regularly assigned person can't cover his or her route. If you can help, please contact Judy Collins, coordinator of BCA's newsletter distribution team, at jc.swings@verizon.net or 703-276-0124. ■

The New and Improved BCA Web Site is Coming

An updated and redesigned BCA web site full of timely resources is in the works. Watch for it at bluemontcivic.org. ■



Bluemont Civic Association
PO Box 5134
Arlington VA 22205

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

MARCH 2007

March General Meeting 3/28

APRIL 2007

Exec. Committee Meeting 4/10

Artomatic 2007 4/13-5/20

Crystal City (artomatic.org)

ATS Spring Fair 4/21

April General Meeting 4/25

SENIOR ACTIVITIES

The Arlington Office of Senior Adult Programs offers a variety of music appreciation, exercise, sports and travel opportunities year-round throughout the County. Call 703-228-4744 for info.

►Zoning Changes FROM P.1

meeting (taken from the 2/24 press release at www.arlingtonva.us):

- “Approved a technical change to the Zoning Ordinance to clarify the Board’s authority to modify height, density and tapering requirements in the Zoning Ordinance applied to specific site plans, when such modifications serve the public good.
- Approved an amendment of the General Land Use Plan designation from ‘Semi-Public’ to ‘Medium Density Mixed-Use’ for the northern portion of the block bordered by North Highland Street, North Hartford Street and 13th Street North in the Clarendon Metro station area.
- Approved a rezoning of the First Baptist Church of Clarendon property from ‘C-3’ and ‘R-5’ to ‘C-R’ (Community Revitalization District).”

What effect these changes will have on other properties in the County remains to be seen. ■