

**Bluemont Civic Association  
General Membership Meeting  
February 28, 2007, 7:00 pm  
Lubber Run Community Center**

**Call to Order**

President Judah dal Cais called the meeting to order at approximately 7:15 pm.

In attendance were Judah dal Cais, Carl Drummond, Terry Serie, Wendy Dean, Ed Fendley and Lisa Byington. Also in attendance were 3 other Bluemont Civic Association (BCA) members.

**Approval of Minutes for 11/29/06 and 1/24/07 Meetings**

Secretary Lisa Byington distributed draft minutes for the 11/29/06 and 1/24/07 meetings. Byington explained that the minutes for the 11/29/06 had been inadvertently not included on the agenda for the 12/20/06 meeting and therefore had not been approved by the membership. A motion to approve the 11/29/06 minutes was made and seconded. The membership voted unanimously to approve the minutes as drafted. A second motion was made and seconded to approve the 1/24/07 meeting minutes. The membership voted unanimously to approve the minutes as drafted.

**County Board Member Walter Tejada**

School Board member Ed Fendley introduced County Board member Walter Tejada and expressed BCA's appreciation for his support of civic associations in Arlington.

Tejada began his remarks by mentioning the wide diversity that Arlington enjoys, and the need for the Arlington County government to reach out to all segments of the community. Tejada recounted his efforts on behalf of the public defenders' office and in support of community role models for young adult residents.

With respect to property taxes, Tejada reported that the tax rate (\$0.818 per \$100 in assessed value) has remained the same. Although residents' assessments have increased, others have decreased and many have stayed the same. Arlington enjoys a AAA bond rating, which allows it to secure funding at a lower cost than most other municipalities must pay.

Tejada also recounted his efforts on behalf of affordable housing. A BCA member asked whether it is better for the County if the developer is required to build affordable housing on-site, as opposed to contributing to the County's affordable housing fund. Tejada stated that the County's goal is to build 400 new affordable-housing units per year, but the County is falling short of that goal. Generally, it is preferable that a developer builds affordable housing on the redevelopment site. But, at times, it is more cost-effective to put more affordable housing units on a less expensive location, using donations made to the affordable housing fund. Tejada supports the decision not to require affordable housing units in the new high-rise development in Rosslyn, but was opposed to the plan not to include affordable housing in Potomac Yard.

Another BCA member asked about the availability of affordable housing units, and whether preferences are made for Arlington county employees (such as teachers, police and fire

personnel). Tejada responded that the County's "live where you work" program helps defray some of the costs of living in Arlington, but the program is very competitive and not all County employees are able to take advantage of it. Tejada reported that he is uncertain how long the wait list is for affordable housing units.

A BCA resident stated her concern about the increased density in Arlington (regardless whether the new units are luxury units or affordable housing). Tejada reported that high-density development is occurring on only 11% of the County's land along the Metro corridor. In addition, Tejada supports efforts to restrict "McMansions" because of the loss of green space.

A BCA member asked Tejada for his position on the proposed redevelopment of the Peck-Staples site. Tejada agrees with BCA that more transition is needed from the Metro corridor to the neighborhoods. His understanding is that JBG is amending its site plan proposal. BCA will continue to have much input during the site plan review process, to ensure that the community benefits from the redevelopment.

A BCA resident asked about any limitations that might be placed on the number of rentals within a neighborhood. The resident's home is surrounded by rental houses that are occupied by young adults who frequently hold loud and disruptive parties. Tejada mentioned Arlington County's noise ordinances and limits on the number of people permitted to live within a house. A BCA executive board member also suggested that the resident contact the owner of the rental houses to complain about the tenants.

A BCA member asked whether the County had received any proposals to redevelop Jordan Manor, the small apartment building on Wilson Blvd. at N. Wakefield St., and whether such a proposal might qualify for bonus density because the developer is an affordable housing corporation. Jordan Manor has been an asset to the BCA community, but the many surrounding single-family homes would be severely negatively impacted by a high-rise building on that site. Tejada reiterated his support for an adequate transition from new high-rises to existing homes.

A BCA Board member asked about the Arterial Traffic Management plan to make Wilson Blvd. more pedestrian-friendly. Tejada reported that 15% of the project has been completely designed, but many challenges exist before the ATM project can be completed. The Wilson Blvd. corridor has limited space for wider sidewalks and significantly more funding is needed for any construction work to be done. Tejada said he has walked Wilson Blvd. and agrees that more is needed.

The final question to Tejada involved a proposed western entrance for the Metro in front of the proposed Fairmont (old INS building). Tejada reported that, even if federal funding is secured, significantly more money from the County or from a developer would be necessary.

Finally, Tejada reiterated his support for extending Metro to Dulles Airport and his opposition to any proposals to widen I-66.

### **Peck-Staples Site Plan**

Terry Serie, BCA's Information Coordinator for the Peck-Staples Site Plan Redevelopment, and President dal Cais reported on the meeting held with County Planning staff on February 24, 2007. It appears that there is near unanimous consensus that the Peck-Staples site should act as a transition from the building heights on the east side of Glebe Road and the single-family homes west of the Peck-Staples site. Several members of the SPRC suggested a maximum height of approximately 110', not the 165' height requested by JBG. It appeared that there was a consensus that there should be a taper from the Regent south toward Wilson Blvd. and from Glebe Road west toward Wakefield Street.

JBG is currently reviewing its options in light of County Staff's opinions, including the possibility of building a big-box store by-right. JBG is expected to work on a revised redevelopment proposal.

County staff are considering recommending a through-street be built connecting Glebe Road to N. Wakefield St., tapered toward Wilson Blvd. to limit the number of houses on Wakefield St. that would be impacted, consistent with the Master Transportation Plan).

### **Officer Reports**

None of the BCA officers in attendance had any additional information to report.

### **New Business**

The membership discussed the possible redevelopment of Jordan Manor, the small apartment building on Wilson Blvd. at Wakefield St., by an affordable housing corporation. Because of the bonus density that the County grants to affordable housing projects, this redevelopment could be difficult for the BCA community. President dal Cais agreed to monitor the situation.

The membership also discussed getting on the County Board's "Walking Meeting" agenda. The Walking Meeting would give BCA the ability to highlight the issues faced by BCA residents as the County Board strolls through the BCA neighborhood.

### **Miscellaneous Announcements**

Neighborhood Day is scheduled for May 12, 2007. BCA Board members discussed various possible sites and President dal Cais agreed to check site availability and report back.

### **Adjournment**

President dal Cais adjourned the meeting at 9:00 pm.