

BLUEMONT CIVIC ASSOCIATION
General Membership Meeting
Wednesday, September 24, 2008, 7:30 pm
Arlington Traditional School

Call to Order

President Judah dal Cais called the meeting to order at approximately 7:30 pm. In attendance were Judah dal Cais, Mary Thorne, Sam Ferro, Suzanne Sundburg, Judy Collins, Bob Atkins, seventeen Bluemont Civic Association (BCA) members and two nonmembers.

Approval of Minutes for 6/25/08

Secretary Mary Thorne distributed draft minutes for the 6/25/08 Annual Membership meeting. A motion to approve the 6/25/08 minutes with a correction was made and seconded. The membership voted to approve the 6/25/08 minutes as drafted. Thorne will correct and forward the 6/25/08 minutes for posting to the BCA Website.

Arlington Forest Club Renovation Plan

Karen Serfis, representing Arlington Forest Club's board, presented the club's renovation plans for its bathhouse, built in 1959. The current bathhouse contains inadequate bathrooms and changing areas, and the club would like to add a second floor (keeping the building within its existing footprint) to give it meeting space and to provide shelter to pool goers during thunderstorms.

The club plans to renovate the bathrooms to make them compliant with American with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements, and the locker room/changing areas also would be upgraded. Under the plans, a new second-story deck would allow spectators to view the pool area.

The club's membership roll will continue to be capped at 675 members, and the same maximum pool occupancy limit of 224 would continue to apply. The primary point of concern is parking. The club currently has 80 parking spaces (some in the paved lot and some in the grassy lot next to N. Carlin Springs Road). The county is asking the club to increase the number of parking spaces to 118. However, this would require the club to pave the grassy lot (and cut down many mature trees).

According to club surveys, each car parked at the facility contains an average of 3.2 people. At that rate, if all 80 parking spaces were filled, there would be 256 people onsite (which would exceed the pool's occupancy limit). It therefore would make little sense to provide additional parking spaces for people who could not be admitted to the pool. Even if the grassy lot were to be paved, the club still would not meet the county's 118-space requirement.

Several BCA members who live nearby the club spoke out against paving the grassy lot, citing the loss of trees and the resulting increase in rain runoff during storms due to the increase in impervious surface.

The club asked the membership for a letter in support of its renovation plan—keeping off-street parking capped at 80 spaces and leaving the grassy lot as is—to be sent to the county on October 22. A preliminary vote by BCA members was unanimous in support of the plan. The BCA membership will take a final vote on the Arlington Forest Club renovation plan at its 10/22/08 general membership meeting.

Removal of the Bluemont Trail Split-Rail Fence

Park Service Manager, Kevin Stalica spoke on the issue of the removal of the split rail fence along the Bluemont Trail. Stalica is a park manager for North Arlington and responsible for all Arlington Country trails. The fence was removed on August 2 because it had reached the end of its life cycle and the County did not realize that the community would object to its removal. Stalica apologized for this and asked how Bluemont wanted the County to proceed. The membership was split between those who prefer the fence-less look and others who want some sort of new barrier erected. Native flowering shrubs, flowering trees or shade trees could be planted as an alternative to a new fence. A synthetic fence would last longer but cost more. The split rail fence at the crossing on Kensington has fallen down. Kate Mattos and her neighbors along Bluemont Drive are gathering comments and suggestions. The membership advised Stalica not to remove the large rocks near the trail.

Redevelopment of Safeway Site

It was reported that Safeway stated that they were not interested in selling to a developer. JBG Rosenfeld, the developer in question, will attend the October 22 BCA meeting to explain their plans for the neighborhood in general. The density allowed for the Safeway site will ultimately be deciding factor. It was suggested that BCA be proactive and put forward a concept of how we would like to see the site developed. What kind of Main Street do we want?

Replacement of Quincy Street Recycling Center

The recycling site on Quincy St. near the Metrobus lot will be closed due to the upcoming development project which includes DARPA and other organizations. It was suggested that Bluemont could offer the area near the corner of Kensington and Carlin Springs as an alternative. The membership discussed this site at the September general meeting, but one member objected to locating a recycling station there due to poor road visibility along Kensington and poor lighting in the area. Park Service Manager, Kevin Stalica announced that the two sites being considered as replacements are 1) 19th and North Kirkwood, and 2) Quincy Park. Neither site is in Bluemont.

Reports from Officers, Committee Chairs and Representatives

The new signs advertising BCA monthly meetings have been installed by Sam Ferro. There was no growth in membership since the June meeting. There is \$5000 in the treasury. BCA needs to update its neighborhood conservation plan.

Candidates Night will offer an opportunity to pose questions of the School Board and County Board candidates. The site of this October event has not yet been finalized.

Judah dal Cais proposed a community building fundraising event for 2009. The proceeds would go to a local Arlington nonprofit organization. Anyone who would like to pursue this idea should contact dal Cais. The advertising deadline for the October newsletter is October 1. Articles are due to Suzanne Sundburg by October 3.

Adjournment

Judah dal Cais adjourned the meeting at 9:05 pm.