

**Bluemont Civic Association**  
General Membership Meeting  
September 26, 2007, 7:30 p.m.  
Arlington Traditional School

**Call to Order**

President Judah dal Cais called the meeting to order at approximately 7:30 p.m.

In attendance were Wendy Dean, Suzanne Sundburg, Carl Drummond, Judah dal Cais, Lisa Byington, Terry Serie, Judy Collins, Mary Thorne, 9 Bluemont Civic Association (BCA) members and 2 nonmembers.

**Approval of Minutes for 6/27/2007**

Former Secretary Lisa Byington distributed draft minutes for the 6/27/07 Annual Meeting. A motion to approve the 6/27/07 minutes was made and seconded. The membership voted unanimously to approve the 6/27/07 minutes. Byington will forward the approved minutes for posting on the BCA Website.

**Update on the Arterial Transportation Management (ATM) Project for Wilson Boulevard—Richard Best and David White**

County staff member Richard Best indicated that the projects included in phases 1 and 2 are 99% done. There are a couple of minor items left, including installing the bus shelters. They will look at the lighting situation. There is a plan to replace the ratty bushes near the trailhead. Richard will follow up with Judah in two weeks with a timeframe for bush replacement. There were questions about the height of the traffic signals at Wilson and Edison. The height was determined by the utilities. There are two issues with this light: 1) It is so high that drivers don't see it. 2) The signal cycle is off. Another question was raised about the location of newspaper vending boxes near the bus shelter on Wilson Blvd. These should be on the landscaped strip instead of on the sidewalk, but after being moved to the landscaping strip they end up back on the sidewalk. There needs to be a countywide ordinance regulating the placement of these boxes. A member asked if the school flashing light on N. George Mason Dr. (north of Wilson Blvd.) could be placed on the black signal-light pole on the corner of George Mason and Wilson. Richard will check with his attorneys about this question. Another member asked if the County achieved its objective by taking away the "free right" turn from Wilson to George Mason. Richard said yes, the objective was for greater safety for pedestrians and to slow traffic. This was part of a County Board initiative to take away "free rights" throughout the County.

*Status of phase 3 of the ATM*

The County is looking at changing the one-mile stretch of Wilson between N. Frederick St. and the County line from four lanes to three. This would allow for one lane in each direction and a shared left turn lane. The County is still studying this proposal. Initially, the County would only re-stripe the pavement but eventually could widen the sidewalks by reclaiming part of the existing road bed.

Re-striping is not expensive, but the price tag goes up significantly when the work on the sidewalks is added. This proposal came out of the ATM study/public charette and has not been implemented before in Arlington County. The County is also looking at doing this on Four Mile Run. Before making this change on Wilson the County would get input from the Bluemont, Boulevard Manor, and Dominion Hills Civic Associations. The project the County just finished in our area was only 3 to 4 blocks long and cost \$1 million, so clearly a one-mile project would cost a lot more.

### **Crime Report for past 6 months—Police Officer Tim Koch**

There have been a lot of burglaries, but the police caught the two guys who were responsible for most of these. In the past four weeks, there have been three burglaries that are unsolved. The officer who focuses on burglaries is Roger Estes. These three burglaries involved forced entry into houses accessible to bike trail. There have been two sexual assaults, one in the workplace and the second was between family members. There have been some larcenies associated with the mall or in offices where a laptop was left on a desk overnight. There have been some incidents of pickpocketing in the mall area. There have been 5 to 6 incidents of larcenies from autos, which are still under investigation. Two cars were unlocked, three were entered by breaking a window, and one car was stolen out of a driveway. There have also been reports of prostitution in the Safeway parking lot.

### **Peck-Staples and Arlington Housing Corporation Projects**

Peck-Staples Information Coordinator Terry Serie reported that there will be a Sight Plan Review Committee (SPRC) meeting on October 11 regarding the Peck-Staples and Arlington Housing Corporation (AHC)-Jordan Manor sites. The JBG Companies and AHC have apparently reached some agreement to swap land so the construction of a new high-rise (9 or 10 stories) building to replace the Jordan Manor (3-story apartments on Wilson Blvd., between N. Woodrow and N. Wakefield Streets) will be on the Peck site and the townhouses originally proposed for the southwest corner of the Peck site will be on the current Jordan Manor site or on adjacent property AHC owns.

Revised plans have been submitted to the County. There are 24 units in Jordan Manor now. This could be extended to 31 units without any zoning changes. The details on the time and location of the SPRC meeting will be posted on the Website within the next few days. A new look at the 1980 General Land Use Plan (GLUP) amendment adopted by the County Board for the N. Wakefield and N. Woodrow Street areas reveals that there is precedent for refusing to re-designate the Peck-Staples block as C-0-2.5. Terry proposes to send a memo to the co-chairs of the SPRC for the Peck-Staples project and members of the County Planning commission on behalf of BCA. Based on the decisions made in 1980, the memo requests documentation or amendments created since then that would negate the earlier decision. The memo had been circulated in advance to BCA officers, and several copies were available at the meeting. A motion to send the

memo was made and seconded. The motion to send the memo passed unanimously. Terry will send the memo on September 27.

### **Follow-up to Walking Town Meeting**

Terry Serie has written a 12-page report on the Walking Town Meeting (WTM), which will be available on the BCA Website soon. He has also created a second report concerning what the County is already doing or has agreed to do. These two documents indicate progress in getting the attention of the County and correcting some problems in the Bluemont area. The County Board members were very impressed by the turnout for the Bluemont Walking Town Meeting, which was considerably higher than in other Arlington neighborhoods. The membership expressed its thanks to Terry for his hard work in organizing this event.

### **October Newsletter Deadline and Articles**

The text deadline for the newsletter is October 9. The layout will be done by October 13–14 with the printed newsletter delivered to Judy Collins for mailing by October 18.

The newsletter will include articles about candidates' night (Judah/Suzanne), the Neighborhood Conservation (NC) funding round coming in December (Wendy), a potential update on WTM issues (Terry), a potential update on the Peck-Staples-Jordan Manor plan (Terry), and future speakers for the general membership meetings. Possible speakers are County Board candidate Mary Hynes in October (Terry to confirm) and unopposed School Board candidate Abby Raphael in November.

### **Neighborhood Commercial Truck Parking—Robbie Guenther**

Robbie Guenther from the Texaco station on Wilson Blvd. explained how the Budget rental trucks ended up in the Safeway lot and why they were no longer there. He had an arrangement with Safeway to park his trucks in its lot, which ended after neighbors complained to the County. The neighbors objected to the large number of trucks, including tractor-trailer trucks, and the trash associated with the people renting these vehicles. The County was willing to Robbie's trucks stay in the Safeway lot if he filled out some paperwork, but Safeway informed him he could no longer park his vehicles there. He is now looking for a place to park his 15 trucks. Robbie is very disappointed that nobody from the community approached him before complaining to the County. Judah dal Cais and Robbie will talk. This issue will be revisited at the October Executive Board and general membership meetings.

### **Neighborhood Conservation**

NC Representative Wendy Dean reported that BCA turned in its Neighborhood Infrastructure Plan (NIP). She expressed thanks to Suzanne Sundburg for her work on this project. The County was impressed with the quality of Bluemont's NIP. There is a funding round coming in December for NC projects that are

already in the queue. Among these eight projects is one in our area on 9<sup>th</sup> St. between N. Edison and N. Frederick Streets. Wendy expects this project to be funded in December. In addition, the County is looking for streets that are candidates for the “missing link” program. There is money available where there is existing sidewalk with a gap of three houses or less to fill in the missing link. Members should talk to Wendy Dean if they are interested in applying for this program.

### **Website/ Listserv**

BCA members, who have not already done so, should sign up for the Google listserv. To sign up, members should go to <http://www.bluemontcivic.org/> and look for the link to Google Groups. For the announcement list, only one or two e-mails will be sent per month to cover time-sensitive items, particularly those that arise after the newsletter has been printed. Contact Terry Serie to get on the e-list for Peck-Staples information. If members have a problem signing up with Google Groups, they should contact Suzanne Sundburg or Dave Leichtman.

### **Membership**

Treasurer Judy Collins reported that the neighborhood-wide distribution of the newsletter had been done in September. She asked that she be contacted by residents who had not received their newsletter. BCA has 250 members currently.

### **Adjournment**

President dal Cais adjourned the meeting at 9:00 p.m.