



The Lyon Village Bulletin

www.lyonvillage.org

March 2007

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Bromptons Volunteer Needed For Bulletin Delivery

We currently need a Bulletin delivery person for the Bromptons at Clarendon. Delivery can not take place on a regular basis without a person to deliver each route. We have more than twenty delivery routes in Lyon Village and each requires a delivery person. Our dedicated deliverers are requested to get the Bulletin out within about three days of receiving it, timeliness is important for our newsletter. The delivery task takes about 30 minutes a month. Our thanks go out to the folks who make the delivery of the Lyon Village Bulletin possible. Contact Bill Wooten at 703 527 0378 if you can help out.

CERT Training Now

If you're interested in learning how to be better prepared in your home and workplace, and to assist others in an emergency, Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training may be for you. During the eight session course you'll learn how to: become better prepared for disasters; treat the injured; put out small fires; and to conduct search and rescue. The curriculum also includes team management, disaster psychology and terrorism modules.

Training is free to Arlington County residents 18 years or older (16 and older if accompanied by a parent) and able to participate in all aspects of the training. The class meets six weeknights (consecutive Tuesdays or Thursdays) and two Saturday mornings. Upon completion of the training, residents have the option of becoming active members of their neighborhood CERT. To-date; over 330 residents have completed CERT training, 150 are now members of neighborhood teams. CERT classes begin on Thursday, March 22 and Tuesday, March 27. For information or enrollment contact ArlingtonCERT@aol.com.

Living Green in Arlington on March 15

Living Green in Arlington: Renewable Energy, Clean Water, and Buying Responsibly event on Thursday, March 15, 6:30 to 9:30 pm at NRECA, 4301 Wilson Blvd. In conjunction with the 29th *Arlingtonians for a Clean Environment* annual meeting, this free program will include a panel discussion moderated by Arlington County Board chairman Paul Ferguson with Scott Sklar of the Stella Group; Don Waye of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Office of Wetlands, Oceans and Watersheds; and Monique Tilford of the Center for a New American Dream. Refreshments courtesy of Whole Foods. Exhibitors include: Alice Ferguson Foundation, Arlington County, Capitol Greenroofs, DC Green Realty, Dominion Floors, Energy Star, EnviroArchitecture, Flexcar, Nature by Design, Ten Thousand Villages, Virginia Cooperative Extension, and Virginia Sustainable Building Network. Information: 703-228-6427 or office@arlingtonenvironment.org.

General Meeting Monday March 12 at 8PM At the Community House

It urgent that you attend!

Next Steps After County Board Approval of the Clarendon Zoning Changes and the Church Project

As most readers know, the County Board on February 24, 2007, approved by a 4-1 vote the proposed C-R zoning changes advertised on January 27 and also approved the land use change, re-zoning, and site plan related to the Clarendon Baptist Church. Board Chairman Paul Ferguson was the lone dissenter. The significance of the Board's action, and our response, will be the focus of our March 12 meeting at 8 pm at the Lyon Village Community House.

Here in a nutshell is what the Board's actions do:

- Allow the Board to rezone residential land in Lyon Village to C-R commercial;
- Allow the Board to approve building heights of up to 125 feet on commercial property next to single family homes;
- Define the area that can be rezoned to C-R commercial to include sites within ¼ mile of the Metro entrance – which is almost to Lee Highway – and that is only a guideline, not an absolute;
- Set a precedent for such rezoning and greater height by rezoning the church's R-5 property to commercial and approving a building 100 feet tall across from single family homes.

Focus of the March Meeting

The March meeting will focus on where we go from here. We first want to explain the significance of the Board's action to Lyon Village, both to property owners near Clarendon and well back in the Village. We then want to describe the possible actions that can be taken and which the membership might wish to support. In particular, we want to describe some of the legal grounds that exist for challenging the Board's action in changing the zoning laws and approving the church project.

We also want to indicate the likely financial cost of pursuing another legal action, and the types of financial commitments that will be needed from the community if legal action is to be pursued.

Some 40 to 50 Lyon Village homeowners spoke out against the zoning changes and project at the February 24 County Board meeting. A total of 125 people signed up to speak (although not all spoke). In approving the changes and the project, the Board rejected the advice of its Planning Commission, which had voted 7-3 on February 12 to recommend that the Board defer consideration of all the action items under April.

Pledge to Protect Our Neighborhood

The Lyon Village Citizens Association has shown strong opposition to the zoning changes required to allow construction of the controversial FBCC *Views at Clarendon* building. Our County Board ignored broad community opposition and approved drastic changes to Arlington zoning despite the huge number of folks who sent e-mails, displayed yard signs, and came to speak at the Feb 24 County Board meeting. There is strong community support for nearby affordable housing, but this issue goes far beyond housing.

Previously, the LVCA voted to support legal action to block this zoning change. The decision by our County Board affects not only the residential buffer adjacent to the Clarendon business but also our Lee Highway edge. Unless the Board's recent rezoning action is reversed, our neighborhood will be facing spot rezoning battles one after another, at tremendous cost in time and money. LVCA neighbors are now working under a tight deadline to file a new motion to protect our neighborhood. The main obstacle at this point is making certain there is enough money to move forward. The need is urgent to have community members pledge or donate funds quickly. Pledges can be spread out over the course of the next 1-2 years. Our neighbors personally filing this suit and signing their names to the lawyer's contract need to know there is community support to back them up.

In order to proceed with a lawsuit, over \$100,000 is required. Within the last week pledges for amounts ranging from \$2500 to \$5000, and even \$10,000 have been placed by concerned citizens in Clarendon. If each Lyon Village household were to donate just \$150, costs could be covered. Any amount is appreciated; please donate what you can. Time is of the essence. Contact Mary Renkey at mrenkey@verizon.net with your pledge. Checks for the legal fund can be made out to *Blankingship & Keith* and mailed to the Renkey's at 1423 N. Highland St, 22201. Thank you!

More Tax Burden!

Two important County hearings are upcoming. On Tues March 27, the Budget Public Hearing will begin at 7pm. On Thurs March 29 the Tax Rates Public Hearings will begin at 7pm. Both meetings take place in the County Board Room, 307. At the March 29, meeting there will be two hearings. One on the proposed real estate tax rate and one on the proposed personal property tax and other proposed matters as may be advertised for consideration. Visit the County Board website at www.arlingtonva.us/Departments/countyboard/meetings/countyboardmeetingsbthprocedures.aspx for info on advanced sign-up procedures. Individuals may sign-up to speak on-site the night of each hearing. Take your chance to figure out where our ever-greater tax burden is going.

Clarendon UMC Programs

CUMC at 606 N. Irving has frequent programs of interest. For example, the church has twice monthly (2nd and 4th Thursday) programs for Seniors including: Time of Worship at 12pm; Hot Meal at 12:30pm for \$4.00; and Free Programs at 1:15-2:00. Contact the church at 703.527.8574 for info or for lunch reservations. No reservations are necessary for the program items.

Please Shovel That Snow

Thanks to all of you in the community who shoveled following the February snow storm. At least a couple of folks on each block, however, did not remove snow and this caused serious problems for people with disabilities, for those with strollers, and for pet walkers. If one of your neighbors was unable to shovel, give them a call. Maybe they are physically not up to it or don't own a shovel and are too timid to ask for help. This community effort takes little time and helps prevent risks. Any kids out there looking for ways to give back to a kid-friendly community and maybe earn a few dollars, get out your shovels. You will be heroes of the day!

Send letters to the Editor to maw123@gmail.com

Why the Zoning Changes Are So Important to Lyon Village

The Board's recent actions adversely affect Lyon Village for two very important reasons. First, the Board removed longstanding protections in the zoning ordinance that prevent commercial encroachment into Lyon Village and prevent tall buildings from being built next to Lyon Village. Second, in approving the church's rezoning request and 100 foot apartment building, the Board set a precedent for doing this again and again on other sites, particularly along our neighborhood edge.

As most readers know, the County Board initially approved the church project in 2004 in the face of strong community opposition. The neighbors then filed suit, and in September 2006, the Virginia Supreme Court, on appeal, found that the County had violated its own zoning ordinance and found the project illegal.

Then in late January of this year, just days before its January 27 meeting, the County Board announced that it would advertise changes to the zoning ordinance so that the ordinance would conform with the building the church wants to build. The Board also announced that it would re-advertise the land use plan change, re-zoning, and church apartment building plan it had approved in 2004. The Board did not consult with us first or notify us in advance. We only read about the proposed changes in the public meeting announcement, along with everyone else. At the January 27 meeting, the Board voted 4-1 to advertise the items and to place them on the agenda of its February 24 meeting for final action, just 4 weeks later. It was indicated that the great rush was so that the church could meet a March 9 deadline to apply for tax credits for its 10 story apartment building.

On February 24 the Board eliminated two very important types of protection in the C-R zoning ordinance, the zoning ordinance provision drafted in 1984 specifically for the Clarendon commercial area. First, it removed the limits on the types of property that can be rezoned to C-R. Formerly, only property designated "medium density mixed-use" in the land use plan and zoned "C-3" (the predominant zoning category in the Clarendon commercial area) could be rezoned to C-R. Now any property, including low density residential property in Lyon Village, can be rezoned to the C-R commercial district. The Board made this very clear when in a following action it rezoned the church's low density residential R-5 property to C-R commercial. Most of Lyon Village is zoned R-5 and R-6, which are single family home districts.

Second, the Board gave itself the discretion to waive height and other rules in the C-R zoning provision. These rules formerly were mandatory, and could not be waived. As staff explained, the new rules allow the Board to approve heights of up to 125 feet (about 12 stories) across the street from homes in Lyon Village. The old mandatory height limit was 55 feet. The Board then used this new discretion to approve the church's proposed 100 feet tall apartment building across the street from single family homes.

The Board also did something else. It modified the C-R ordinance to state that it is "designed for use within a quarter mile" of the Metro entrance. That takes you almost to Lee Highway. Moreover, this is only guidance, meaning that the Board doesn't need to limit itself to a quarter mile.

The bottom line is that if the ordinance changes are allowed to stand, and the rezoning of the church's R-5 property and the approval of its 10-story building are allowed to become the precedent, it will be very difficult for the Board to deny similar requests from developers who buy property on our side of 13th Street, or along Fillmore, Garfield, and other streets leading into the Village from Wilson, particularly if the developer offers affordable housing or other community benefits. And if the Board denies the request, that developer in turn can take the Board to court, arguing that it must give him the same thing that the Board gave to the church.

Thus, the Board's actions, if allowed to stand, may lead us down a slippery slope. As the remaining parcels in Clarendon are built out, the Board's actions may encourage land speculators to acquire houses along our borders and even well into the neighborhood, allow them to deteriorate with the intention of eventually tearing them down, and seek the same rezoning and building approvals given to the church. It has happened elsewhere and can happen here.

Arlington's Most Wanted Fugitives

The Arlington County Police Department is now posting Arlington's Most Wanted fugitives on the Police website. These are suspects wanted for serious and violent crimes. They have eluded arrest and the Warrant/Fugitive Unit is asking for the public's help to bring them to justice. Photos, along with information about the fugitives and the crimes they have committed, are available online at www.arlingtonva.us/police. Click on the link to Arlington's Most Wanted. If callers with information about a suspect wish to remain anonymous, they can call Crime Solvers at 1-866-411-TIPS (8477). Crime Solvers offers a reward of up to \$1000.

Village Market

House-Sitting: Decades-long Lyon Village resident, having work done on own home, will be available to house-sit from June-September 2007. Dates flexible. Live-in or not. References. Tel.: 703-525-9794. e-mail: gris@erols.com.

Nanny with extensive childcare experience seeks FT position M-F to care for your infant or young child. I have sterling credentials, am attentive & nurturing w/excellent work ethic. Please contact me at 703 748-0489.

House Cleaner Needed for Lyon Village home every other week. English-speaking preferred. Please contact Jim at (703) 447-2586.

Outer Banks Summer Rental: LV family has beautiful, family-friendly home in the private ocean community of Schooner Ridge. View/book home at www.Twiddy.com, property #B-415 (Shellter). Neighborhood has clubhouse, three community pools, full gym, game room, tennis courts, and large play-ground. The Town of Duck's great shops and restaurants are just a short stroll away. Contact owner Myra Probasco at Basco5860@aol.com to arrange a LV neighbor discount.

Housekeeper Needed: Lyon Village couple seek warm, reliable, experienced, full-time or afternoon housekeeper. We need a good driver. Non-smokers only, please. We have a 15-year old daughter and a 19 year old cat. 703-527-8325.