



Between the Boulevards

February 2008

Published by the Boulevard Manor Civic Association for the residents of Boulevard Manor, including Spy Hill, Stone Ridge and Park View

School Boundary Change Proposal Stirs Activism

A proposal for relief of crowding in some north Arlington elementary schools generated impassioned protests from Boulevard Manor and many other potentially affected neighborhoods. On January 11, the Superintendent of Arlington Public Schools announced a proposal to address crowding problems by changing many of the school boundaries and by moving various special programs.

The proposed changes affecting Ashlawn Elementary School were the most extreme in the county, moving 150 students - including all those residing in the southern portion of Boulevard Manor - from Ashlawn to other schools. BMCA and the Ashlawn PTA quickly mobilized to express strong opposition to the original proposal. The resulting efforts included a strong presence and numerous speakers at the January 17 School Board meeting and at a public hearing the following week.

Most dramatically, Ashlawn families gathered on the morning of January 18 for a protest march along Manchester St. from 1st St. to Ashlawn. The demonstration was covered by several television stations and newspapers.

The changes proposed in the January 11 plan were opposed by many neighborhoods and PTAs. Some members of the School Board quickly made clear they would not support the plan. The Superintendent, on January 30, released a revised proposal that greatly reduced the anticipated impacts to Ashlawn. The new plan maintains the entire Boulevard Manor neighborhood within the Ashlawn boundaries.

BREAKING NEWS: On February 14, the School Board voted to adopt a plan that resembles the Superintendent's revised proposal. No changes will directly affect Ashlawn. Interested neighbors can view all relevant documentation and follow the school boundary process at www.apsva.us. School Board chairman Ed Fendley and Ashlawn principal Edgar Miranda will be guests at BMCA's February 25 meeting.

Keep Up with the Latest Neighborhood News!

In the recent controversy over proposed school boundary changes, the BMCA e-mail list (colloquially known as "Topica") saw the heaviest traffic in its 7½ years of existence. The mailing list proved to be an effective tool for communicating rapidly the latest developments in a constantly evolving situation.

But, of course, only the subscribers to the mailing list benefit from its exceptional usefulness. **All neighbors are invited to join the list by sending an e-mail to bmca-subscribe@topica.com.** You can view the message archive at www.topica.com/lists/bmca. Remember: your e-mail address remains confidential unless you choose to post a message to the mailing list.

Boulevard Manor Civic Association General Meeting

Featuring the School Board Chairman, Ashlawn Principal, and other guests

A packed agenda awaits neighbors at our winter meeting. We will be joined by Ed Fendley, chairman of the Arlington School Board, and Edgar Miranda, principal of Ashlawn Elementary School.

Two guests will discuss proposed changes in Accessory Dwelling ordinances: Fran Lunney, Coordinator of Housing Planning at the Arlington Department of Community Planning, Housing and Development, as well as Dave Leibson, a member of Arlington Housing Commission.

As usual, we will receive a safety report from the Arlington County Police Department as well as BMCA committee reports. Among new business is a proposed by-laws change to move the spring general meeting from May to June.

For additional information, contact BMCA vice president Paul Svercl at vicepresident@boulevardmanor.org or 703-243-8693. Please come and participate!

**Monday, February 25, 7:00 p.m.
Church of the Brethren, 300 N. Montague St.**

Because of the full agenda, the meeting will begin promptly at 7:00.

Accessory Dwelling Permit Changes Proposed

On December 10, 2007, the Housing Commission made a recommendation that the County Board amend the Zoning Ordinance to permit accessory dwellings. An accessory dwelling is a second dwelling with kitchen and bath on a single family lot. It may be inside the main house or detached. An amended ordinance is likely to change the way Arlington homeowners use their properties to generate rental income.

If the County Board decides to consider the Commission's recommendations, a full public process would ensue, offering opportunities for public input. Interested neighbors should review the Commission's Accessory Dwelling report, available online at <http://www.arlingtonva.us/Departments/CPHD/housing/pdf/page60104.pdf>.

The Arlington County Civic Federation, of which BMCA is a member, also has had extensive discussions on the issues related to accessory dwellings and has made recommendations to the County Board. For more information, visit <http://www.civfed.org>.

REMINDER: The non-emergency phone number for the Arlington Police is 703-558-2222.

Please clear the sidewalk in front of your home after snowfall. Remove or melt ice on sidewalks to help keep the neighborhood safe.

Please send your 2008 BMCA dues today.

Annual dues for Boulevard Manor Civic Association are only \$10 per couple, \$5.00 for singles (no need to pay for missed years). Please send cash or check payable to BMCA. Thank you for your support!

Name(s):

Telephone:

Address:

E-mail address:

I am interested in:

Planning neighborhood social events

Helping to develop the Neighborhood Conservation Plan

Emergency readiness planning

Other:

Return to Dori Byron (703-243-4025), 524 N Madison St., Arlington, VA 22203 (send by mail or drop in Dori's mail slot)

Change in Bylaws Proposed

BMCA member Lee Dioso announced on the e-mail list his intention to make a motion at the February 25 meeting to amend the Association Bylaws. Article V states: "The regular meetings of the Association shall be held during the months of February, May, and October at a time and place to be designated by the Board of Directors." Lee's proposed amendment would change the May meeting to June.

Lee stated: "I believe this change will benefit the Civic Association. Because the spring meeting is when we elect new officers and board members, it is usually the most important meeting and the hardest to prepare for. Yet, because it's scheduled only three months after the winter meeting, we have relatively little time to get ready. And then there's a five-month gap before the October meeting. By spacing the three meetings evenly, we can make the associated workload more manageable."

Draft Neighborhood Conservation Plan (NCP) to be Reviewed by County

Volunteers have completed a new draft of the NCP for review and comment by County staff. After BMCA responds to county comments, the plan will be finalized, making projects recommended by the civic association eligible for Neighborhood Conservation funds.

The current version of the NCP can be viewed at our web site, www.boulevardmanor.org. All neighbors are invited to review the draft. Submit any comments to BMCA vice president Paul Svercl by e-mail at vicepresident@boulevardmanor.org.

Nominating Committee to be Appointed

In accordance with BMCA bylaws, at the February 25 general meeting, the membership will elect a nominating committee to choose a slate of candidates for the 2008-2009 officers and board positions.

Subject to the membership approval at the meeting, the nominating committee will comprise Dori Byron (703-243-4025), Phil Klingelhofer (703-524-5438), and Lee Dioso (703-351-9645). If you would be interested in serving as a civic association officer or board member, or know someone who may be, please contact one of the committee members.

Foxes May Endanger Pets

Foxes are an increasingly common sight around the Boulevard Manor neighborhood. Here's what the Animal Welfare League of Arlington advises: You should not approach a fox as it may feel cornered or restricted which may, in turn, provoke an attack. Take steps to make sure your home is not inviting to foxes

or any other predators by not leaving pet food outside and securing trash receptacle lids. Exercise precautions such as closing pet doors and keeping all pet food inside. Please do not leave your pets outside unattended and don't let cats roam free. If you encounter a fox during the day, it does not mean that it is suffering from rabies as people often believe.

Park Improvements under Construction

Work is underway in Bluemont Park to replace an aged bridge and to restore the streambed in the middle of the disk golf course. The bridge and its concrete abutments were completely removed, along with many tree trunks that were in the stream channel.

In addition, park personnel recently began the removing of a large community of invasive plants, such as multi-flora rose, honeysuckle, privet, and mulberry. Plans call for planting a significant number of trees to fill the open space once occupied by the exotic species.

The stream restoration project involves placement of large boulders in the streambed. These new obstacles will diminish water velocity during storm events, reducing erosion and channel degradation downstream. Planting along the stream banks will help stabilize the slopes. This work should be completed by the end of March.

Any stumps and iron beams currently at the site will

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Julia and Marco Ovando of 5th Road N. welcomed daughter Kaiya Lluvia on January 12.

BMCA president Chuck Norton is recovering from heart surgery in December and reports he will be back at his post soon. Chuck thanks vice president Paul Svercl and the BMCA board for taking the lead, particularly on the school boundary issue.

Ninth Annual Easter Egg Hunt & Adult Social

Saturday, March 22 from 10:30am to noon

Church of the Brethren, 300 N. Montague St.

This annual celebration will again be co-hosted by the Church of the Brethren and BMCA. There will be candy and fun for kids up to 10 years old, with refreshments and fellowship for the adults. Younger children will get a head start at 10:40, so arrive early!

If you are interested in helping, please call Dori Byron at 703-243-4025.

be removed.