

BROOKLAND-BUSH HILL NEWS

Mar 2019

A newsletter for and by the residents of Brookland, Bush Hill, and Gunnell Estates in Alexandria, VA.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Trees, Roads and Neighborhood Quality of Life

Sandra "Jeannie" (Graham) Henry, President

Mark Sickles at Mar. BBHCA Meeting

Please join us at our March 19th meeting of the Brookland-Bush Hill Civic Association, where Delegate Mark Sickles, will give the latest update on the legislative session in Richmond and what that means to us. Some of the issues that we are likely to hear about are the latest attempts to erode home rule in Fairfax County by striking down the county's regulation of the use of homes in residential neighborhoods as (B&B type) short-term rentals. Given our resident's past concerns with homes being used as illegal boarding houses in BBHCA, this is likely to be an issue of considerable interest to our members. Transportation agreements made at the state level, such as public-private partnerships for adding tolls to area highways, are another issue on which Delegate Sickles has been asked to speak and in fact we may have a Transurban representative present to make brief some comments as well. Other issues before the General Assembly include election security, drones, motorist use of cellphones, and increased legal protections for senior citizens. As always, this is our opportunity to comment on or raise issues that are really important to us. So please join us for what is always an interesting talk by, and with, Mark Sickles.

Two Local Projects affecting BBHCA

Two local projects have been the subject of special BBHCA meetings in the last year. The land transfer for the Oakwood Senior Housing Project has moved forward and reviews are beginning. Also, a design has been selected for the pedestrian crosswalk at Franconia and Westchester and it is rumored that construction may start at any time. Since BBHCA did not receive the promised advance notice on this, we've requested a special BBHCA meeting with transportation officials and expect to announce a date for that at our March meeting.

Report on "Living with Trees" Talk

At our November BBHCA meeting we received an outstanding talk from Jim McGlone (Virginia Department of Forestry) on suburban tree safety and impact on home value. The BBHCA residents present felt that the information presented was so important to the home enjoyment and values in BBHCA, that they requested it be summarized in the newsletter going out to all 800 households. So here goes, and apologies for any inaccuracies resulting from rapidly scribbled notes. We heard that trees are a tremendous multiplier of neighborhood home values. Studies have shown that that the single most cost-effective way to raise a home's

COMMUNITY MEETING

March 19
(Tuesday)

7:30 pm

**Bush Hill
Elementary School**
(cafeteria,
right side entrance)

AGENDA

Board and Committee
Reports

PRESENTATION

Delegate Mark Sickles

value is to plant a shade tree, that houses sell faster in a neighborhood with a lot of trees, and that neighborhoods with trees have lower crime rates because urban forests signal to criminals that people are paying attention, and so they go elsewhere. One of the reasons that buyers value trees is because they provide bird habitat,

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November Meeting Minutes

President's Report:

Bus stops – littering sign has been discussed with Jeff McKay's office. We need to determine the best place to request it be placed. Note there is a new trash can on the west side of Franconia Road. Crosswalk – Referred to VDOT. No additional information. Mark Sickles will be at the 3/19/19 meeting

Budget:

Budget was distributed, discussed, and unanimously approved.

Minutes:

The minutes from the November meeting be held until November meeting for approval.

Membership:

We will be ending the year at the same membership total as 2017.

Neighborhood Watch:

Need new chair. Mary moving out of the area. This includes handling sheriff reports and attending meetings.

Board Elections:

Elections held and the current board was re-elected.

New Business

Van Dorn Street development – five members met with Jeff McCay. They cannot answer questions without first choosing a developer. The question is whether or not that parcel of land would make a good site. The group spoke with the housing authority and received the same information. The main worry is older people plus grandchildren (requirements are up to 4 people) in the dwelling. There is a hearing Tuesday, November, at 4:00 p.m. No solution to the traffic issue this presents and it was noted this was not on the comprehensive plan as the site is a non build zone with storm water facility. Concerns also include wildlife being threatened, along with 100+ year old trees. In the plans 90% of the land would be developed.

VDOT Moving Ahead this spring with construction of a pedestrian refuge on Franconia Road at Westchester Street

Robert Michie

Contitution and Bylaws Chair

Virginia Department of Transportation will begin construction of a pedestrian refuge on Franconia Road at Westchester Street. The refuge splits the problem of crossing Franconia Road into two parts. After crossing to the refuge pedestrians can wait for a safe moment to complete crossing the remaining distance to the other side of the street. Construction was authorized in January and contract award is this month. Construction activities will begin in March and be completed in June. The project is described as a median extension and pedestrian crossing with a median refuge on Franconia Road and a left turn lane on Franconia at Bush Hill Drive. Supervisor McKay's office is sponsoring a final design review at the Franconia Government Center, 6121 Franconia Road, at 7:00 p.m.

President's Message

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and one study showed that that the presence of less common birds can raise a home value by as much as 30K. (Note: Let's keep the red shouldered hawk and pileated woodpeckers coming back to BBHCA!) Trees improve quality of life as well. Studies show that they reduce stress and improve mental health. They denature a lot of chemicals in the air that can hurt you (like ozone), they intercept deadly particulate matter coming from local highways, they manage stormwater and help prevent yards from flooding, and they dramatically reduce local air temperatures in the summer (We saw a heat map showing a 17 degree difference between areas with low and high numbers of trees.) In fact trees can directly reduce your home cooling costs from 10 to 50%. You can get an idea of the annual value of each tree in your yard by going on-line to the National Tree Benefit Calculator. However, what if you are worried about falling trees? To realistically understand the risk, homeowners should remember that for every tree that falls, tens of thousands of trees do not fall,

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2019 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION
Brookland-Bush Hill Civic Association

Membership Year: January 1, 2019–December 31, 2019

Join us—for the good of *your* community.

BBHCA provides many opportunities for you to take an active role in decisions that affect your quality of life and property values as well as make a difference in your community. BBHCA prints a newsletter, maintains a Web site, and e-mails community updates and alert notices. Only members have a vote at BBHCA meetings on decisions that affect the community and the governance of BBHCA. Join today and support your civic association's efforts to keep our neighborhood a great place to call home. For current information on BBHCA activities, please visit Facebook or go to www.bbhca.net.

Enclosed are my member dues: \$20.00 (household) \$10.00 (individual)

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY The information provided here will be considered confidential and used only for BBHCA communications and membership verification.

NAME: (LAST) _____ (FIRST) _____

NAME: (LAST) _____ (FIRST) _____

STREET ADDRESS: _____

HOME PHONE: (703) _____

E-MAIL(S): _____
(required for e-mail communications and community alerts; see below)

E-mail Communications

Please notify me *by e-mail* of community concerns deemed important by BBHCA. I may request that e-mail communications be discontinued at any time. Your e-mail will be used only by BBHCA.

Request for Donation

Your donation will be used to help offset the cost of printing and mailing the BBHCA print newsletter, the website, and other member-approved services. Thank you!

I would like to make a donation to BBHCA for \$10 \$20 Other \$ _____

Please mail this completed form with your check (payable to "BBHCA") to:

BBHCA Membership
5779 Westchester Street
Alexandria, VA 22310

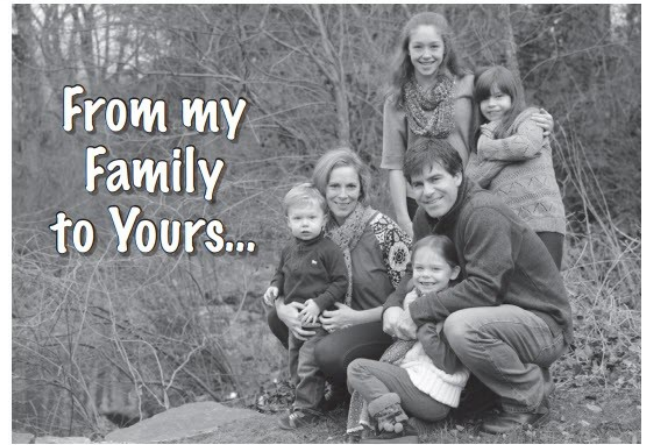
Questions?

E-mail: membership@bbhca.net

www.bbhca.net

Now is the time to renew your Brookland-Bush Hill Civic Association Membership!

Page 3 of this newsletter is the 2019 BBHCA Membership Form. For only \$10.00 for individuals and \$20.00 for households you can help keep our neighborhoods a great place to live. We are always accepting new members and welcome donations which go directly toward helping BBHCA remain an effective voice for the community. For the most current information on BBHCA activities, please visit our website at www.bbhca.net or the "Brookland-Bush Hill Civic Association" Facebook page.



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BBHCA Board and Committees

President: Sandra Graham (aka Jeannie Henry), president@bbhca.net

First Vice President (Newsletter): Jackie Hawkins, newsletter@bbhca.net

Second Vice President (Membership): Elise Swinehart, membership@bbhca.net

Treasurer: Joan Akins, treasurer@bbhca.net

Secretary: Danny Hawkins, secretary@bbhca.net

Constitution and Bylaws: Bob Michie, bylaws_constitution@bbhca.net

Land Use & Transportation (Lee District): Carol Alim, landuse@bbhca.net

Neighborhood Watch: Mary Breedan, neighborhoodwatch@bbhca.net

President's Message

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even in bad weather and high winds. (In fact, when a tree sways in the wind it results in growth that make the trunk stronger.) However trees can become weak and fail, and there are visible signs of poor health that a homeowner should not ignore. Warning signs include fungus such as conk mushrooms growing on the side of the tree, lesions on the trunk with a shiny black area inside (a very bad sign), mushrooms growing at the base of the tree, a big increase in the number of dead branches in the crown of the tree (crown dieback), large dead branches, a lot of water sprouts on the large branches of the tree, and big patches of missing bark (often an end result of heavy insect damage). If you see these signs, or are worried about structural problems like double trunks and included bark, then a certified arborist can help you determine if you have problem, and what steps should be taken. You can find an independent ISA certified arborist at TreesAreGood.org (it also has more information on tree risks), and the larger tree care companies often have an ISA arborist on staff as well as a lab for the diagnosis of tree diseases. Finally, what if you are planting new trees and want to make a smart choice for your property? Native trees support wildlife and usually have fewer diseases. A couple of good choic-

es with very few disease or pest problems are Bald Cypress, American Hornbeam, Loblolly Pine and Black Gum. Tree that are not recommended are true Ash trees, Black Walnut (a disease is killing these trees in the southeast), Norway Maples (invasive), ornamental pears (brittle), and American Elms (unless you can an improved resistance variety). Keep these out of your Recycling Bin Recycling programs are becoming more costly in the U.S. and what you put in the blue bin can make or break efforts to keep recycling affordable in Fairfax County. One bad choice can contaminate large quantities of material causing companies to refuse to buy it, or even destroy expensive taxpayer-owned recycling machinery. The top five offenders in Fairfax County are plastic bags (recycle these at the grocery store), shredded paper (put this in the compost bin or trash instead), hangers, cords and hoses (donate hangers and trash the cords and hoses), takeout containers and cups (trash) and dirty diapers (trash). Please be a good citizen and keep recycling affordable. New BBHCA Neighborhood Watch Chair Needed Following a superb performance in this position over the last few years, we are losing Mary Breeden to other climes and so are looking for volunteers for this important role. Please speak up at the meeting or e-mail president@bbhca.net if interested.