

BROOKLAND-BUSH HILL NEWS

May 2018

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

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Take 2: Elections, Taxes and Franconia/ Westchester Project

Sandra "Jeannie" (Graham) Henry, President

Trying Again

Because schools closed for the snow on our March meeting date, we've had to move a lot of important business to our May 22nd BBHCA meeting, including our speaker, Jeff McKay. Therefore some of what is below is repeated from the previous newsletter. What is new is that we will also hear about the planned design for the "Franconia Road at Westchester Street Median Refuge Project". BBHCA residents have had strong opinions about prior designs, so I urge you to come hear what the county is proposing.

Jeff McKay at May BBHCA Meeting

Please join us (at 7:30 pm at Bush Hill Elementary on Tuesday, May 22nd) for a meeting of the Brookland-Bush Hill Civic Association, where we will be hearing from Lee District Supervisor, Jeff McKay, on a wide range of subjects relevant to our neighborhood. Jeff McKay represents you on the Fairfax County Board and has been very diligent in addressing important concerns raised by BBHCA residents over the years. The decisions of the Fairfax County Board have a direct

and immediate impact on all of the residents of BBHCA and--in fact--this month the Board is voting on an increase in the property tax rate for all Fairfax County homes. We've invited Jeff to include this topic in his discussion with us, so please come ready with questions you would like to pose on the what, how and why of the property tax issue. Other topics that we expect Jeff will cover in his talk include the changes in aircraft traffic patterns over our neighborhood and what trends we might expect to see in the future, any updates on plans for the wooded property along the northern boundary of BBHCA (Oakwood Road) and any news or trends related to I-495 noise and traffic patterns adjacent to BBHCA. We've also asked if Jeff could talk a little about local sources of particulate matter pollution in our area and what monitoring or mitigation tools Fairfax County might have in place. As you can see, we do have a number of interesting topics for the evening, and Jeff McKay will likely bring other noteworthy news as well. As noted above, we will also hear about the long-debated pedestrian crossing project for Franconia.

COMMUNITY MEETING

**May 22
(Tuesday)**

7:30 pm

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

AGENDA

Board and Committee Reports
BBHCA Board Elections
2018 Budget Vote

PRESENTATION

Jeff McKay
Lee District Supervisor

May BBHCA Elections and Budget

At our November meeting, we fell somewhat short of the number of voting household needed to hold valid elections for the BBHCA Board and we were unable to hold our regular March meeting. Elections will therefore be held for the

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Senior Discounts with Metro

Bob Michie,
Constitution and Bylaws Representative

Getting old can be a drag. You move slower, the bicycle is harder to pedal, and you drop things a lot. What I can look forward to every morning is that Van Dorn Street station is downhill, and a bus is available to ride back to the top of the Van Dorn Street hill. But now I have something else to cheer me up: senior discounts!

I stumbled on them by accident while buying tickets for Virginia Railway Express last year. I hated the 2017 safety surges, so I started riding busses to Franconia-Springfield to take the train. I bought a round-trip ten-fare ticket every week. After a few weeks, the clerk at the Commuter Store asked my why wasn't I buying a senior ticket. I was surprised to find that the discount was 50%! Instead of paying \$69.50 every week, I could pay only \$34.75! I immediately began buying the senior ticket!

Before I left the window, I asked what he could do

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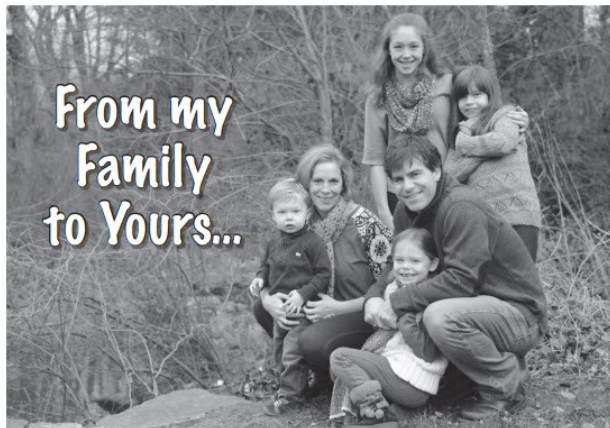
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about my bus fare. Plenty, he said. He issued me a Metro Farecard for seniors. It also gives you a 50% discount. My bus fare on Fairfax Connector dropped from \$2.00 to \$1.00 per trip! On the days that I ride Metro, my \$4.95 fare to the Navy Yard went down to \$2.30.

Getting the Metro Farecard for seniors is reasonably easy. They don't sell them through the "Blue Meanie" vending machines at the stations. You must go to a Connector Store such as the one at Franconia-Springfield Metro Station and show your driver's license. If you are younger than 65 and have a disability you can get reduced fares with a government-issued photo ID and a Medicare card. The process for reduced disability fares is more complicated so visit wmata.com to get the details.

The senior fares do not apply to Metro parking lots. You will pay full fee for parking. I avoid that fee in good weather by riding my bicycle down the hill to Van Dorn station. The discounts are substantial (about \$23 a week) and subsidize my date night with my wife. So perhaps getting to senior status is not the drag I originally thought it was.



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2018 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION
Brookland-Bush Hill Civic Association

Membership Year: January 1, 2018–December 31, 2018

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

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President's Message,

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BBHCA Board at the Association's May 22nd meeting. As of this writing, all of the current officers are willing to stand for re-election, however nominations for all positions are open to all current members of BBHCA. These elected positions include the president, vice-president newsletter, vice-president membership, treasurer and secretary. We will be taking nominations up to and during the November meeting. If you have questions about any of the positions, please contact Jeannie Henry at president@bbhca.net. Twenty member households must be present in order to hold an election. It is very important that we have a good turn-out for this meeting to ensure that our election results are official for the year and that BBHCA can continue to work for you, so please be sure to join us on the 20th. We will also vote on our proposed 2018 budget at the meeting.

Annual Neighborhood Yard Sale June 9th

It's time for spring cleaning, down-sizing those overflowing closets, and sorting through the clutter you've been stashing in the spare bedroom. The annual

BBHCA yard sale is the perfect opportunity to find new homes for those excess treasures, and make a little cash too. Participation in the yard sale is free, but in order to ensure that our ads draw a good crowd of customers to the neighborhood, we need to have an idea of how many households will participate and the kinds of goods that will be available. If you are interested in having your items listed for publication, please send an email to dswdanes@gmail.com by May 30th. Two large directional signs will be placed on Franconia Road but please feel free to put up your own directional signs and balloons within the neighborhood. Recommended times for a successful yard sale are 7:30am - noon.

Spring Plant Sale

After another warm winter and chilly spring, warm weather has finally arrived and flowers are bursting out everywhere. Looking to create or enhance your own garden sanctuary? Did you know that ecologists are increasingly encouraging home gardeners to support their local environment by planting native herbs and trees that provide food and shelter for Virginia wildlife, including songbirds and bees? Fortunately, the annual Garden Green Spring Gardens Day is just around the corner and Master Gardeners will be there to help with plant selections and gardening advice. This year the sale will take place on Saturday, May 19th. More than 40 vendors of rare and unusual plants from across the state will have booths set up for the popular event, which occurs during peak bloom for thousands of the park's trees, shrubs and perennials. The Virginia Native Plant Society will be selling a wide selection of native plants, which will greatly benefit your garden and support bird populations. For more information or directions see <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/gsgp/> or call 703-642-5173.

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Land Use Update

*Carol Alim,
BBHCA Land Use Representative*

Summary of Land Use Meeting in April 2018

Home Depot, Springfield

Plan Amendment; Recommended for Approval 12-0-1. Home Depot was cited for non-permitted outdoor storage. They requested that this storage restriction be removed. They want to use some of the parking spaces closest to their garden shop for storage. There is excess parking in the garage, however, the lost parking spaces are the same level as the entrance to the store. And the garage is for use for all tenants in the shopping center, not just Home Depot. They are going to add/improve landscaping to provide buffer with neighboring residential community. Springfield Forest representative indicated that there are deficiencies with this plan, but they recommended approval because they see the increased screening as a benefit to their community. I abstained due to concern that this might set precedent for other tenants.

Of special interest to BBHCA

Oakwood Road—PCA 82-L-0071

This application was originally presented to the Land Use Committee in January; it is scheduled to be presented for a vote at the May meeting. This application is for the property at 5504 Oakwood Road, which is located on the north side of Oakwood. This application is for an amendment to the approved site plan. This property is zoned I4, Medium Intensity Industrial District, which permits a wide variety of industrial uses. The approved use is Contracting and the current tenant, a landscaping company, meets this requirement. Other contracting options would include plumber, electrical, small construction, among others. This property was cited for two violations: a building code violation and a zoning violation. The building code violation, the installation of a tent-like structure without appropriate permits, appears to have been resolved with the removal of the structure a couple of weeks ago. The zoning violation was issued because the approved plan was not followed for paving part of the site, installing curbs and gutters, and no outdoor storage. This application would replace the original site/development plan,

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which was never implemented. The new plan, if approved, would supersede the original plan. The proposed plan proposes two options...

Option A would keep the current building that is on the site; pave parts of the front and rear of the property for parking; provide approximately 650 square feet of space on the east/west sides of the property for outdoor storage; dedicate 10 feet of frontage for future widening of Oakwood (this was included in the original plan); reserve an additional 8 feet for right-of-way (new); implement required storm water management requirements.

Option B would be a complete re-development of the site (tear-down, rebuild) with expanded (additional) uses. The new building would be approximately 4,500 square feet with a maximum height of 75 feet. The site would include paved surface for parking, approximately 650 square feet of space for outdoor storage. Storm water management improvements are necessary. Right-of-way dedication along front of property for widening of Oakwood and potential vehicular bridge connecting with Vine. Expanded uses requested are: temporary storage for vehicles awaiting maintenance; warehousing; public uses.

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

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

Have you already renewed your BBHCA membership for 2018? Page 3 of this newsletter is the 2018 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 help the Civic Association 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.