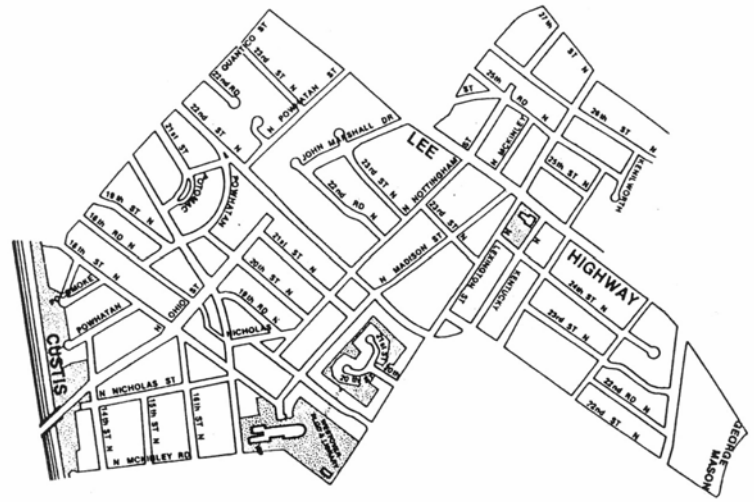


The Leeway Overlee Leader

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Civic Association
<http://www.leewayoverlee.org/>



VOLUME 27, NUMBER 4

JANUARY 2006

General Membership Meeting

Wednesday, January 18, 2006
7:30 p.m. -- Lee Recreation Center
5722 Lee Highway

The Condition of the Arlington School System

Featured Speakers:

**Dr. Robert Smith, Superintendent
Arlington County Schools**

Refreshments provided

County School Superintendent Will Speak at January Meeting

Dr. Robert G. Smith will be the major speaker at the civic association meeting on January 18th. He will address a number of subjects: quality of instruction and staffing, future school redistricting reviews, demands on school operating budgets, and rising facility construction/renovation costs. His presentation will include some PowerPoint slides. He looks forward to addressing specific questions from local residents.

Dr. Robert G. Smith was appointed Superintendent of Schools in July 1997. During his time with Arlington Public Schools, he has emphasized raising the achievement of all students in Arlington and eliminating the gap in achievement among certain groups of students.

Mark your calendars with the date so that you can voice your concerns about the County Schools.

Rising Construction Costs Delay Local Projects

In the past half year the bids received for numerous County capital projects have far exceeded in-house estimates. This has resulted in a scramble to identify extra money for projects currently under construction. The award of new contracts has been delayed.

The long-awaited landscaping improvements at the Lee Center on Lee Highway have been placed on hold due to this cost crunch. The money set aside for that work may have to be used for other, more immediate capital improvements elsewhere in Arlington. At present it is unclear whether the Lee Center work will need to be reduced in scope or whether funds to do the whole project can be secured through the next bond in late 2006.

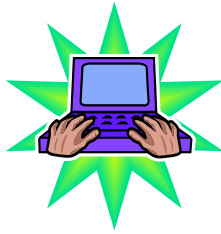


Other construction efforts in the County and across the region are also impacted by these escalating prices. Much of the recent finger pointing regarding the expected cost of rebuilding Washington-Lee High School was really due to these unanticipated cost hikes. The same is true for the almost weekly changes in the estimate for the new Washington Nationals baseball park in D.C.

The County's neighborhood conservation program is also feeling the crunch. Due to escalating construction bids, fewer street improvement and park renovation projects can be funded with existing bond funds. This cost escalation—particularly for raw materials like concrete and asphalt—will likely affect the size of next fall's bond requests to be put before the voters.

Community News Via E-Mail

Do you want a day-in-advance reminder of civic association meetings? How about prompt notice of other local community issues that arise between newsletters? Your address is not displayed to others when messages are sent. To be added to the addressee list, send your e-mail address to:



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LEEWAY OVERLEE CIVIC ASSOCIATION

Officers

President:	Vicki Howard	703-304-4487
Vice-President:	Suzanne Idziak	703-538-5288
Secretary:	Ladd Connell	703-241-2422
Treasurer:	Carolyn Connell	703-241-2422

Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee

Leeway

Representative:	Rob Swennes	703-532-6101
Alternate:	Michael O'Connor	703-237-5432

Highland Park/Overlee Knolls*

Representative:	Cliff McCreedy	703-538-4568
Alternate:	Roger Morton	703-536-7233

*The HPOK NC representatives are elected by the HPOK Civic Association.

Arlington County Civic Federation

Delegates: Vicki Howard, Jerry Auten, Suzanne Idziak, Rob Swennes
Alternates: Amy Appelbaum, Carolyn Connell, Donald Masters

The Leeway Overlee Leader is edited by Rob and Kathee Swennes (703-532-6101); distribution coordinator is Amy Appelbaum (703-241-8446). The association webmaster is Jim Mountain (703-536-4082). Articles and other news items can be mailed to the editors (6101 N. 22nd St. 22205) or sent by email (kswen@juno.com).

LEEWAY OVERLEE CIVIC ASSOCIATION 2006 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Please complete this form and mail it with a check for \$2.00 per adult to Carolyn Connell, 6113 N. 22nd St., Arlington, VA 22205.

Make check payable to:

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____ Check if you wish a receipt. Enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

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Thanks for your support!

County Board Restrains Future McMansions

In November the County Board enacted changes to the coverage allowances for single-family lots. These lots (R-5 through R-20) constitute about 70 percent of the non-federal land within the County. After a five-year process of analysis and community review, the Board responded to complaints that some new houses and home additions are totally out of character with the neighborhood and tend to destabilize it (and lower property values).

Proponents of restrictions on future home footprints did not get all they had hoped for, but they did see a rollback in the 56% coverage allowance that has been in effect for several decades. In place of that one-size-fits-all coverage allowance, the County has adopted a sliding scale system based upon the several single-family residential zoning districts. In the R-6 districts (which include almost three-quarters of the detached home lots) the new coverage allowance is 40% for total coverage and 30% for the main building (i.e., home). That is, the footprint for any future home or existing home with addition cannot exceed 30% of the total square footage of the lot. On a 6,000 square foot lot zoned R-6, this means that the home

footprint could not exceed 1800 sq. ft. Total coverage on the lot could not exceed 2400 sq. ft. The total coverage figure includes not only the home footprint but also the coverage for any driveway and garage. Bonus coverage is allowed for front porches, detached garages and oversized lots.



Most homes built in the 1940s and 1950s in our part of Arlington originally covered only 10-20% of the lots. Subsequent additions to homes have increased that coverage average. But it is the increasing replacement of old, solid homes with new “stick-built” homes that has significantly increased coverage on lots. Few homes in Leeway Overlee exceed the new guidelines. But the new rules will help to reduce the chances that a “mega mansion” will be built next to your

home. The new rules also tend to protect neighborhood home stock stability.

Notwithstanding this moderate rollback in residential coverage allowance, most homeowners will still be able to make significant additions onto their homes. Several civic groups in northwest Arlington strongly supported the coverage changes.



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Community Notes

PODS and Dumpsters

The redevelopment taking place in Leeway Overlee often leads to the placement of PODS and dumpsters on neighborhood streets. What are Arlington's rules regarding these storage devices? This question was recently raised within the civic association, and we decided to research the matter.

Any private storage device or vehicle placed within the County right of way requires a permit. For dumpsters and PODS this is done through a Public Right-of-Way Permit. The permit application can be picked up at the Department of Environmental Services office at 2100 Clarendon Blvd. (Suite 813), or it can be downloaded from the web at <http://www.arlingtonva.us/departments/EnvironmentalServices/dot/traffic/parking/EnvironmentalServicesHb6.aspx>.

A fee is assessed for each day that the storage unit is within the County right of way. The current minimum charge is about \$35 for the first day, though the per diem cost drops significantly for longer periods. The permit costs for a dumpster placed on the street during construction can exceed \$1000 per year. A dumpster is required to have traffic cones or some other reflective material on the corners nearest the road travel lanes so that it is not an unseen obstruction to passing vehicles.

What does PODS mean? The acronym stands for Portable On Demand Storage. In Arlington, the right-of-way permit for a PODS is normally applied for by the resident who wants to have a storage device parked at the curb outside his house. A storage trailer is provided once the permit is approved. Temporary storage of personal goods in a PODS or similar container on the public right of way is normally not to exceed one month. Only in rare instances will the County permit a PODS at the curb for a longer period. Such a storage device may be allowed on private property (such as in a driveway) for a longer period. Check with County staff for restrictions that may apply (703-228-3629). The cost for delivery, rental and pickup of a PODS for a month runs about \$250.

If you suspect that a PODS on the street has overstayed its permit, call 703-228-6570 and provide the street address where the storage unit is located. Give your name and phone number so staff can get back to you once the matter is reviewed. If the unit is no longer permitted, the homeowner will be notified to have it removed immediately. If it is not moved, the County will have it towed away and bill the responsible party.

Westover Library Update

The timeline for construction of a new Westover Library has slipped, but design review is continuing. Demolition of the oldest section of Reed School near the corner of Washington Boulevard and N. McKinley Road is scheduled for this coming spring. Construction of the 15,000 sq. ft. replacement library on that site will follow. The 50% design for the building has been approved. For the most up-to-date information, go to <http://www.arlingtonva.us/Departments/Libraries/LibrariesMain.aspx> and click on "About" and then "Westover Library Planning". The Libraries POC is Susan McCarthy at 703-228-6336.

Preserving Older Homes in Our Neighborhood

The cooling real estate market may slow the number of home teardowns in and around the Leeway Overlee area. But some people are going further to help preserve existing housing stock. If you or someone you know is interested in buying and living in an older home in our area, you may want to contact the ad hoc Committee to Preserve Historic Westover and Fostoria. It can be reached by email at preservewestover@comcast.net. When the committee learns of a house that will soon be for sale, it alerts the people in its data base. Ideally a match can be made before the property is placed with a commercial real estate firm. Likewise consider contacting the committee if you may sell your home and preservation of the property is important to you. It might just help your home find a good, new family!

Clearing Sidewalks of Snow

In case of winter snow, each resident must clear the sidewalk in front of his home. Be sure to have a snow shovel purchased in advance and ready. The civic association's Volunteer Snowmen brigade will be out in force to ensure that certain key walkways to Westover and the East Falls Church Metro station are cleared. Be a good citizen and clean the walks of any nearby neighbors who may be out of town or who are elderly. To be most effective, sidewalk snow removal must occur before pedestrians have compacted it. If your sidewalk is shady, a bit of Ice Melt may also be needed to keep residual snow from becoming ice. But be sparing of chemical usage, since nearby trees can be harmed by deicing salts.

Recycling of Computers/Electronics

The recent holidays found many Arlingtonians with new computers and other electronic gadgets, leaving residents with a disposal problem for the older, unneeded devices. The County does have recycling for many types of electronics. This service is drop off rather than curbside pickup.

Arlington residential households can recycle computers and other electronic items at the County's Household Hazardous Materials drop-off site. The facility is open every Saturday, 9 am – 3 pm and is located at the Water Pollution Control Plant off S. Glebe Road at 3155 S. Fern St. Call 703-228-6832 for more information.

Items accepted free of charge include old or unwanted central processing units, hard drives, keyboards, printers and copiers, laptop computers, wires and power cords, computer speakers, surge protectors, video cards, scanners, computer mice, cell phones, software, and other peripheral computer equipment. Computer monitors are accepted for a \$15 fee. Televisions can be recycled for a \$20 fee. TVs and CRT monitors contain, on average, 6-8 pounds of lead and other harmful materials which must be reclaimed to protect the environment.

The web address for information is <http://www.co.arlington.va.us/Departments/EnvironmentalServices/swd/EnvironmentalServicesSolidWasteMain.aspx>.