

Nominating Committee Seeks Officer Candidates

Amy Appelbaum and Chips Johnson will serve as this year's Nominating Committee to recommend individuals to serve as Leeway Overlee Civic Association officers and fill other key roles. If you are new to the community (or a long-timer) and interested in maintaining the quality of life in the neighborhood, consider serving. The election of officers will be held at the late May general membership meeting. A list of the officer positions is on this page of the newsletter. At the May meeting the community will also select its representatives to the Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee and delegates to the Arlington County Civic Federation. If interested in any of those positions, please contact Amy at 703-241-8446 or Chips at 703-532-5831.

LEEWAY OVERLEE CIVIC ASSOCIATION 2005 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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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
Alternates: Amy Appelbaum, Rob Swennes, Steve Compton, Ray Koch

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).

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County Board to Act on Lot Coverage Issue in May

Several years ago, before the current rush of construction in our neighborhood, the County Board initiated a look at home development in the single-family zoned portions of the County. This was triggered by numerous complaints that new construction and some home additions were damaging the character of Arlington's neighborhoods. The Board mandated that four elements be looked at: average lot width computation, height of homes, pipestem lots, and coverage limits for lots. The first three have been addressed by the Board. The issue of lot coverage is the one remaining. The Planning Commission's recommendations on lot coverage were approved for advertising by the County Board at its February 12 meeting. Board action on lot coverage is expected in May of this year. To see the County Manager's report on this item, go to item 27 on the agenda for that meeting: <http://www.arlingtonva.us/Departments/CountyBoard/meetings/2005/feb/0212/index.htm>. The zoning changes being advertised are summarized in Attachment E to that report.

At present the Zoning Ordinance permits certain improvements to cover up to 56% of the surface of any single-family building lot in the County. The improvements counted are primarily the home, any garage, and the driveway and any parking pads on the lot. Coverage does not include, for instance, sidewalks and patios.

Few residential lots have been developed to anywhere near the 56% coverage limit. The few that have approached this coverage percentage have triggered a storm of protest from nearby residents. In other cases it is the overall mass of the house or the questionable architectural style of a large home that has caused an adverse neighborhood reaction.

The County's Zoning Ordinance and Review Committee (ZORC) spent at least four years examining what kind of changes in the coverage allowance should be recommended to the Board for adoption in order to

curb the most egregious types of excess coverage. One deficiency recognized by all was the current lack of any separate coverage limit applying to the home itself as opposed to the total coverage on the lot. Under the current rule, an owner or developer can, by right, cover up to 56% of the lot with home or pavement or a combination of the two. While the storm water runoff effects of the two may be similar, the visual appearance can be dramatically different. Fortunately no house in Leeway Overlee appears to approach the 56% coverage allowance. But at least three homes have, due to their extensive asphalt areas, reached 56% total coverage. This has caused some storm water problems for numerous homes down hill from this new construction.



The house at corner of Sycamore and N. 27th Sts.

At least two nearby homes have been identified as possible poster candidates for bad infill development. The first is the home known simply as "the Sycamore Street house", which is located at the corner of Sycamore Street and N. 27th Street. The other is located on N. George Mason Drive just

north of Lee Highway (behind the Caribbean Grill). It is called "hacienda house" by some locals. It is a standard post-World War II colonial home that has been



The house near Lee Highway and N. George Mason Dr.

surrounded by a single-story wraparound addition in Spanish style. Both homes were built largely by right by the then-owners. Something comparable to these examples could, as a matter of right, be built next to your home tomorrow! The ZORC coverage reform proposal would reduce the bulk of future infill development by placing a sliding scale of coverage limits on the R-5 through R-20 zoning districts. All of the single-family neighborhoods encompassing Leeway Overlee are zoned R-6.

Under the ZORC proposal, future new construction and home additions in Leeway Overlee would be generally limited to a maximum total coverage of 40%. The footprint of the home itself would be limited to 30% of the total square footage of the lot. The great majority of

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Lot Coverage, from p. 3...

current homes in the area cover only 10% - 20% of the lot. The new limits would encourage plenty of room for real back yards, significant shade trees, and absorption on the lot of most rainfall.

The coverage reform percentages will not directly impact the teardown of existing homes. Almost all existing property owners would have significant additional coverage allowance available on their lots for an addition or a new, larger home. The ZORC coverage proposal recommends certain bonus density for homes with detached rear garages and front porches. The details of those bonuses will be outlined at the civic association meeting. Likewise, the proposal would "grandfather" any homes that are rendered nonconforming by the adoption of the new coverage system. Thus if one of those homes were destroyed by fire or some other casualty, the then-homeowner would generally be able to build again on the historic footprint of the house.

The Arlington of farms and summer vacation homes for residents of Washington is a thing of the past. Now people are concerned about whether the neighborhoods in which they have raised (or are raising) their families, comprised largely of homes built in the 1940s and 1950s, are likewise to be cast aside as dated and in need of replacement. The new proposed coverage scheme does not resolve that debate. But it is seen by many as a device to help ensure that future development does not overwhelm the current housing stock.

Battles regarding architectural style, building height and form, rezoning, and other development issues will continue to engage Arlington's maturing neighborhoods. These are matters that local property owners should have at least a passing knowledge of so as to protect their property values and their community.

For those interested in learning more about the subject of residential infill, Arlington County has posted material on the web that addresses the subject of residential infill. Go to <http://www.arlingtonva.us/Departments/CPHD/Forums/lotcoverage/CPHDForumsLotcoverageLotCoverageMain.aspx>.

What is your lot coverage?

It's easy to compute your lot coverage if you have a copy of your plat. Just determine the square footage of your home's footprint and any driveways and separate garage. Divide that sum by the total square footage of the lot. If you need help, call a special County hotline number: 703-228-4793. If you request your coverage percentage and give your name, address, and phone number, you should get a reply within a few days.

Historic Preservation Department To Survey Leeway Overlee Homes

Michael Leventhal, Arlington County's Historic Preservation Coordinator, indicated at the civic association's December 8 meeting that the Leeway Overlee Civic Association area will be surveyed by his staff in this fiscal year. Aimed at helping Arlington's neighborhoods thrive, the surveys take stock of all the houses in a civic association area that are 50 or more years old.

Each survey begins with research on the documentation of the selected housing inventory in the area and moves to the field work, in which the houses are photographed if they have not been radically altered. The Historic Preservation staff compiles the data and produces a report. Leventhal said he would come back to the civic association in a year to present the findings.

As of December, some 7104 houses and other buildings had been surveyed in the County. Some structures have been nominated for the National Register, and several Local Historic Districts (Maywood, Colonial Village) have been created. But the main thing, Leventhal noted is that the process is helping educate the County about what in our neighborhoods is worth preserving. Neighborhoods need to have a sense of "evolution" to provide a quality of life for their residents.



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Neighborhood Conservation Projects Update

The County Board has recently approved funding for two street improvement projects in the Leeway Overlee area. The eastern half of the street improvements planned on N. 22nd Street in the 6100 and 6200 blocks have been funded. This includes pedestrian safety changes to the triangle area where N. Powhatan Street intersects N. 22nd Street. Likewise the first money has been approved for the creation of a planted median and new streetlights on N. Ohio Street between Washington Boulevard and I-66. Both of these projects require additional money in order to be completed. Final funding and actual construction are probably two to three years away.

At the March meeting, the residents of the Leeway area of the association will need to prioritize projects for the June 2005 funding round of the Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee (NCAC). Of the three projects being prepared for consideration, only one is actually eligible for funding at this point. That is the western phase of the N. 22nd Street streetscape effort. It would complete the curb and gutter on the street up to N. Quantico Street, install standard width sidewalk on both sides of the street, and create a tree planting strip on the south side of the roadway. The street would be 32 feet in

width curb to curb all the way between Quantico and the John Marshall/Ohio greenway.

Street approval is being sought on two other projects in the Leeway area. One on N. Nottingham would narrow the street from 36 to 32 feet in order that a sidewalk could be installed on one side from Lee Highway down to N. 22nd Road. A second project in the 5700 block of N. 22nd Road would install curb, gutter and sidewalk (on one side) between N. Harrison Street and N. Illinois Street.

Construction of two neighborhood conservation-funded projects in the area is expected shortly. On N. 22nd Street sidewalk will be built on the north side of the 6100 block between the greenway and the N. Powhatan Street right of way. The road reconstruction project on N. Kensington Street between Lee Highway and N. 27th Street is in final design and should be bid out for construction by mid year. Once the dust settles, residents on that street will have curb, gutter, and sidewalk for the first time and new street lights.

These neighborhood conservation projects are paid for by County bond funds approved by the voters every two years.

AT&T Development, from page 1....

created on the subdivision plat to allow their continued use and existence. It is not known whether the developer has considered instead the construction of a townhouse complex through a special exception or rezoning that would not increase the number of dwellings per acre and which might allow for retention of additional green space and some mature trees.

This is the last large undeveloped tract of residential property in the civic association area—other than the Overlee Community Association. The potential development of the AT&T tract is addressed in the area's 1993 Neighborhood Conservation plan. That plan calls for future development of the site to be consistent with its existing zoning. Either single-family homes or a cluster of townhomes developed through the site plan process would be acceptable. Retention of existing trees would be a key consideration.

Mr. Luis Araya, the County's subdivision expert, has offered to be at the March 16 meeting to answer any questions that local residents may have.



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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Community Notes

Snowmen Scare Off Major Winter Storms!

Our volunteer corps of residents trained to respond to major snowfalls has apparently held at bay any major snowfall in the area for one winter season. Eighteen people currently serve as “volunteer snowmen” in the Leeway Overlee area. They have been trained by the County in the use of small snow blowers that are ideally suited for cleaning public sidewalks. Arlington provided our civic association with six snow blowers this winter for the volunteers to use in the event of a winter snowfall. As it turned out, most of our snowfall was minor. The County will pick up the equipment in the spring and return it in good mechanical order in the late fall. Look for the notice next fall if you would like to join in this community support effort. Our thanks to all of the volunteers who stood ready to clean our sidewalks this winter season!

Lexington Street Traffic Calming Improvements

Most of the County-funded traffic calming features for N. Lexington Street have been installed between N. 19th Street and Lee Highway. In the spring when the ground warms up sufficiently, the final elements in this project will be put into place. Raised crosswalks will be installed on Lexington at N. 19th Street and at N. 22nd Street. A “speed cushion” will be built across the street further north near N. 23rd Street. Some of these cushions were installed last year on N. 16th Street between N. George Mason Drive and Glebe Road. Vehicular traffic seems to be moving at a more modest pace along Lexington Street since the work began. More reduction in vehicle speed should be evident when these last elements are in place.

Rivendell School Use of the Lee Center Grounds

Officers of the civic association have met with administrators of the Rivendell School on Lee Highway regarding the school’s use of the outdoor facilities at the Lee Center. Children from the school use the Center’s grounds daily. Concern has been raised regarding the impact caused by this high level of usage. It is hoped that a memorandum of agreement can be negotiated between the County and the school (and perhaps the civic association) that will outline the responsibilities of the various parties. With an agreement in place, it should be easier to ensure that the property is not overused, that the children are properly supervised, and that other patrons of the Lee Center can enjoy the outdoor landscape that the Center provides. A new seniors garden with plantings to attract butterflies will be constructed as a part of the exterior renovations to the Center.

Community Day/Yard Sale Is Coming Soon!

When winter is past, it is time to think of spring cleaning and the annual Leeway Overlee Community Day and Yard Sale. The first Saturday in June is the date of this year’s neighborhood yard sale sponsored by the civic association. For over 25 years the community has gathered along the John Marshall Drive/Ohio Street greenway to sell, exchange, and purchase furniture, tools, clothes, games, toys and other “treasures.” Why hold an individual yard sale when you can join your neighbors and friends in a truly awesome event? Each year over 100 families take part in this community day festival. Delicious food and music have become part of the tradition. Thousands of shoppers attend. Mark your calendars now for this year’s event on the morning of June 4. Rain date will be June 11.

Brush Pickup and Mulch

Spring cleanup often leaves homeowners with piles of brush that need pickup. Collections are done biweekly and must be requested. You can call the Solid Waste Division at (703) 228-6570, Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. to request a pickup. Please call by 5 p.m. the day before your regular refuse collection day, or by 10 a.m. Mondays to have your request processed that week.

Requests can also be made online. For information go to: <http://www.co.arlington.va.us/Departments/EnvironmentalServices/swd/EnvironmentalServicesSwdSpecial.aspx>.

Mulch is also available from the County. Free mulch is available for pickup at two sites:

North 26th St. and Yorktown Blvd.

4300 South 29th St., at the Trades Center

The County will deliver mulch to your home for a small fee. For information on mulch deliveries and prices, call 703-228-6570 or go online to: <http://www.co.arlington.va.us/Departments/EnvironmentalServices/swd/EnvironmentalServicesSwdMulchOrders.aspx>



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