

**Leeway Overlee Civic Association
Minutes of General Membership Meeting
Thursday, April 6, 2006 at Lee Community Center**

1. Civic Association President Vicki Howard called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. The meeting agenda was adopted, with approval of minutes of the January 18 General Membership meeting deferred. Treasurer Carolyn Connell reported a decrease in net assets of \$84.43 to \$3,738.74 as of 4/4/06, reflecting \$214.22 in income from vendor advertising, CD interest income, and membership fees, offset by \$298.65 in expenses for March newsletter printing, renewal of the Association's domain name (www.leewayoverlee.org), and a bank fee. Ms. Howard then reported on old and new business:

-- The Neighborhood Conservation program had only one Leeway Overlee project eligible for submission to the County through the Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee, which was the west phase of N. 22nd St.

-- Recycling/disposal for computers, batteries, paint, etc. is planned for April 22 at Thomas Jefferson Middle School. Clothing and bikes, especially for children, are also accepted.

-- The Association will hold its elections at the next general membership meeting at the beginning of June. Nominations should be given to Amy Appelbaum at (703) 241-8446 or Chips Johnson at (703) 532-5831.

-- Vandalism (three cars with rear windows shattered) has been reported on the 2200 block of N. Madison St. and Lexington and 27th St. Anyone observing criminal or suspicious activity in the neighborhood should report it to the non-emergency police number, (703) 558-2222.

-- Concerning the gas station at 5501 Lee Highway, the County has yet to provide a definitive reply as to whether incorporating of the RA18 (residential)-zoned strip into the C1 (commercial)-zoned property had been authorized.

-- On the Lee Center/park renovation, the County was unable to move forward because of a funding shortfall; it had allocated only one-third of what the renovation was now projected to cost. Ms. Howard had emphasized to the County's acting head of facilities that the community would like to be part of any decision-making process on how to move forward.

-- The County's celebration of the 400th anniversary of Jamestown will kick off with an Open House May 1 at Central library.

-- The County is offering young trees (2' -6' "whips") for free to Arlington homeowners, one per household, either sweet bay magnolias (a small deciduous tree) or chestnut oaks (a large canopy tree). The Association must reply by April 15; Ms. Howard just needs names, phone numbers, and preferred type of tree.

-- The County is also accepting applications for small parks grants, due May 15.

-- The annual Leeway Overlee Community yard sale is set for Saturday, June 3.

2. Chips Johnson reported on the Westover Library/Reed School reconstruction projects. With the capital budget in deficit, the library project is high on the list of unfunded projects. He recommended that the Association send a letter to the County advocating it be fully funded. (It was in the 1998 bond issue.) Three civic association representatives (from Westover and Tara as well as Chips representing Leeway Overlee) had met with County Board member Chris Zimmerman; Barbara Favola and Paul Ferguson should also be contacted. Reed School, budgeted at \$10 million, is to be included in the next bond issue. Six options for the reconstruction are being examined; the current most likely outcome is a combination of two of them to maintain open space but also allow ease of access. Ms. Howard said the Association would write a letter to the County.

3. Ms. Howard then introduced the evening's featured speakers: Eric Sildon, Chair of the Arlington Public Spaces Task Force; and David Miller, of Arlington's Department of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources. They explained that the County Board tasked the Parks and Recreation Commission in 2001 with revising and updating the 1994 Open Space Master Plan—which is supposed to be done every five years. The Task Force completed its work in 2004, and the County Board finally adopted the new Public Spaces Master Plan (PSMP) December 10, 2005. While the process was longer than originally expected, it was also more inclusive and comprehensive, covering indoor public spaces as well as outdoor ones. The 22-member Task Force conducted surveys of both adult residents and students; established working groups to address different uses/issues (outdoor active, outdoor passive, arts/urban space, land acquisition); and sought input on the draft plan from all relevant Arlington Commissions.

4. The new Master Plan, Messrs. Sildon and Miller explained, identified six objectives: 1) balance acquisition and development of public spaces; 2) preserve and enhance the environment; 3) improve access and usability; 4) enhance arts, culture, and history; 5) develop and enhance partnerships; and 6) manage assets effectively. Based on these objectives and input received, the PSMP recommends five key public space priorities for the County:

- Fully implement the North Tract Master Plan. This refers to the 30-acre parcel north of National Airport. The County has already funded the first phase; the second phase, which would include a world-class aquatic and fitness center, is still under consideration.
- Develop a land acquisition policy.
- Focus on public space as a key aspect of the planning for Four Mile Run restoration.
- Inventory the County's natural resources and create a natural resource policy and management plan.
- Maximize partnership with Arlington Public Schools. Although the County and Schools already have a cooperative relationship, opportunities exist to enhance community use of school facilities when not needed for their primary mission of education.

Each of these recommendations is tied to the objectives, and there many additional recommendations—32 in all. Mr. Sildon acknowledged criticism of the PSMP as “a plan to have a plan,” but the PSMP also includes provisions for monitoring and assessing implementation. He encouraged Association members to read the plan and contact County representatives to support its implementation. The plan is available online at www.arlingtonva.us; in hard copy at Arlington's Central Library; upon request by calling (703) 228-3322; or by e-mailing a request to prcr@arlingtonva.us. The meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.