

**Leeway Overlee Civic Association
Minutes of General Membership Meeting
Thursday, June 28, 2007 at Lee Community Center**

1. Civic Association Vice President Jenni Michener called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. and invited Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee (NCAC) Representative Rob Swennes to report on topics of interest. Mr. Swennes noted concern of some neighbors about the number of commercial businesses that participated in annual **Neighborhood Yard Sale**, which had taken place on June 2. Some commercial vendors have come for years; they are not vetted, and the Civic Association hasn't set ground rules. Mr. Swennes asked if this posed a concern; no one present thought so.

2. Civic Association President Suzanne Kray-Idziak presented the **Treasurer's report**. The Civic Association had an increase in net assets of \$362.15 to \$3,934.04 as of 6/28/07, reflecting \$870 in income (mostly yard sale and membership fees), offset by \$507.85 in expenses (mostly music and advertising for the yard sale). The assets include a certificate of deposit of \$2,900.75 and checking account balance of \$1,033.29.

3. Ms. Kray-Idziak then reported on **old business**:

-- Concerning neighborhood crime, members of the Civic Association had met June 9th with Detective Estes at Resurrection Lutheran Church.

--Concerning the AT&T property [between Harrison St. and George Mason Drive off Lee Highway], Ms. Kray-Idziak had toured it with the developers. Mr. Audia said that the AT&T building would be demolished in a few weeks. Mr. Hinderman said the huge poplars and oaks along Lee Highway would have to come down because they are diseased. Ms. Kray-Idziak and past Civic Association President Vicki Howard disagreed; the trees are quite healthy. The Civic Association will consider what can be done to save the trees.

--Concerning the radio tower adjacent to the AT&T property, WAVA was now off the tower. Ms. Kray-Idziak asked for reports of any continuing signal interference.

--Concerning the Pure gas station site at 5501 Lee Highway, Commerce Bank (represented by Thad Unger, an attorney) has indicated interest in building a bank to replace the gas station. County officials had reviewed the bank's plans and asked the bank to be brought forward in the lot so that there would be parking and a drive through lane in the rear. The Civic Association is concerned with ingress and egress issues. [Ms. Michener was to meet with bank representatives to discuss street and sidewalk improvements.]

4. **Elections**: On behalf of the nominating committee (Amy Appelbaum and Chips Johnson), Rob Swennes presented the Civic Association officer candidates, who were the same as the existing slate, except for the Civic Federation delegates/alternates: President, Suzanne Kray-Idziak; Vice President, Jennifer Michener; Secretary, Ladd Connell; Treasurer, Carolyn Connell; NCAC Representative, Rob Swennes; NCAC Alternate, Michael O'Connor; Arlington County Civic Federation (ACCF) Delegates: Jerry Auten, Suzanne Kray-Idziak (*ex officio*), and Jennifer Michener (*ex officio*); ACCF Alternates: Amy Appelbaum, Vicki Howard, Ed Robinson, and Rob Swennes. All were duly nominated and elected without opposition. One ACCF delegate slot remains open.

5. **Reed School/Westover Library**: On behalf of Chips Johnson, who has led Civic Association efforts on the project, Rob Swennes presented the most recent designs, including the view of the proposed building from McKinley St. & Washington Blvd. A major goal in design has been to maximize green space. However, some trees will be

required to be removed. Members expressed concerns over deforestation in Arlington, and were encouraged to contact Mr. Johnson (703-532-5831).

6. Ms. Kray-Idziak then introduced the first of two guest speakers. Mr. **Jimmy Audia of Crest Development of McLean**, spoke on his firm's **residential development of the (former) AT&T property** and took questions. Mr. Audia said that:

-- A total of 15 houses are being built-- two on the (George Mason Drive) post office side; nine are going in along the new road in the middle of the property; four are going in on a private drive backing up to Lee Highway. The houses are higher-end in price (\$1.15-\$1.5 million), most in arts and crafts style with front porches, columns, stone or painted brick facing, 3300-3800 square feet with attached two-car garages on front. Houses are not pre-fabricated: colors and elevations will vary, but with some uniformity.

-- First step is running a utility line; following that sewers, roads, hydrants, and walking path will be installed. The radio tower is being taken down, and in fact was three weeks overdue for removal. The other, wider (cell) tower will remain and be leased. Actual house construction should begin in November, with completion/sales over 3-4 years.

-- Houses will be sold fee simple, but with a Home Owner's Association responsible for maintaining a decorative perimeter fence and asphalt walk. The existing chain link fence could be removed if there is consensus among neighbors. The extension of N. Greenbrier St. will be a public road, and set back more than the nine feet originally planned from the back of the N. Harrison St. lots.

-- Crest is only building single family houses, as it can do by right; commercial or townhouse development would require re-zoning or a variance (from R-6), be costly and time-consuming. The Civic Association is welcome to raise such options (e.g. that could preserve more green space) with Arlington County; that could speed up such an effort.

-- Crest has no plans to buy the (22207) post office lot, although the post office may move as it leases and does not own the lot. Crest has not bought the Whitman-Walker Clinic lot.

-- Crest is trying to be sensitive to the community's desire to keep nicer trees on the site, such as along Harrison St. Crest plans to plant hollies, Leyland cypress, and willow oaks. Crest will make a site plan with trees shown on it available to the Civic Association.

-- Crest has its own project managers, and uses some regular sub-contractors, but others (e.g. plumbers) vary from job to job.

7. The second and final speaker was **Detective Roger Estes of the Arlington County Police** burglary unit (703-228-4180; restes@arlingtonva.us). Detective Estes provided both general information on **combating burglary** and the recent events in our neighborhood:

-- Most burglaries in Arlington involve knocking at the door and (if no one answers) going in through an unlocked door or window (90%) or kicking the door open. If you see a stranger in the backyard, or anyone suspicious, call the police non-emergency line.

-- Dogs, except for Dobermans or pit bulls, are not a deterrent to most burglars.

-- If you get an alarm system, be sure to put a sign on all doors.

-- The burglaries in our neighborhood typically involved pushing the side or back door in and theft of cameras, jewelry, etc. The 27 year-old perpetrator arrested has confessed to six of the 12 neighborhood burglaries. Since his arrest, there have been two other attempts, but with different (even less experienced) modus operandi. Other suspicious persons in the neighborhood have included a woman giving out Bibles, going into homes and asking to take photos, allegedly for zoi.com house appraisals, and persons posing as Honeywell security salesmen. Remember that you do not have to open your door to a stranger.