

**Leeway Overlee Civic Association
Minutes of General Membership Meeting
Thursday, November 6, 2008 at Lee Center:
East Falls Church Planning; Arlingtonians for a Clean Environment**

1. Civic Association President Jenni Michener called the meeting to order at 7:35 pm and reported on old business. Concerning Tuesday's **elections**, Arlington results included approval of all bond proposals and defeat of the proposal for a county Housing Authority. This followed a well-attended candidates' night held by Leeway Overlee and neighboring Civic Associations on October 29. Turning to replacement of the **Pure gas station** at 5510 Lee Highway, the permitting process for the Commerce Bank is in its final stages. Concerning **Rivendell School's** use of the Lee Community Center grounds/park, County staff had agreed that:

- groups may be required to have use permits to use the grounds;
- the Civic Association/neighbors should meet periodically with school representatives;
- there should be a school staff person to monitor traffic; and
- terms for use of the park should be folded into a Memorandum of Understanding.

However, this MOU has not yet been completed or approved by the County Board. Other potential measures include traffic calming on Kensington, such as posting of reduced speeds during school drop-off/pick-up hours, and parking by permit only on 24th St.

2. Ms. Michener invited **reports** from other officers. Treasurer Carolyn Connell reported that the Civic Association had taken in \$100 in membership fees and disbursed \$226 for newsletter printing, leaving a combined (checking and certificate of deposit) balance of \$3,997. Secretary Ladd Connell reported that the June 11 meeting had addressed Arlington's accessory dwellings proposal (which the Civic Association had actively opposed), East Falls Church planning, and Civic Association elections; full minutes would be posted on the Civic Association website.

3. Arlington County Civic Federation delegate Jerry Auten then reported on **East Falls Church (EFC) planning**. A task force has been meeting roughly every month for the last year-plus; meetings (held at Fire Station #6 on Lee Highway; scheduled for November 19 and December 17) are open to the public. County staff have developed three plans on which they are seeking comment. The plans, referred to as low-, medium-, and high-density, involve building on the existing parking lots to average heights of four, seven, or ten stories, respectively. This means that even the low-density plan would significantly increase density around the EFC Metro station, while dedicated Metro parking would be replaced by parking designed primarily to serve the new buildings. An additional concern for drivers is that under current plans to widen I-66, the third westbound lane will end in the ramp at Sycamore, which may mean more traffic exiting I-66 from that ramp. Mr. Auten circulated drawings illustrating the three plans. Members expressed concern that the added density and lack of Metro parking would effectively eliminate the option of parking there for Leeway Overlee members, many of whom live more than a mile from the station. Additionally, traffic would become significantly more congested. Concerned members were encouraged to get involved.

4. Ms. Michener introduced the evening's speaker, Eleanor Hodges, of **Arlingtonians for a Clean Environment (ACE)**. ACE is a local, non-profit, 501(c)(3) corporation, in its 30th year, with principal funding from the Arlington County government. It is engaged in

environmental education in schools, information displays for community fairs, invasive plant removal, marking storm drains, and some 25 volunteer projects/year. Ms. Hodges started by addressing changes in **County recycling**. The County is renegotiating its recycling contract and expects to introduce recycling of all plastics in the spring. For now, plastic recycling for pick-up is limited to plastics labeled 1 and 2 and any bottle-shaped plastic. Other plastics, including lids, may be recycled at recycling centers; the closest for Leeway Overlee is at N. Quincy St., north of Ballston. The recycled materials are sorted by optical scanner and recycled at plants in Springfield and in Elkridge, Maryland.

5. Ms. Hodges then described ACE's **green living challenge**. It has five components:

- 1) Maintain a Green Home & Garden: To do this, we can use nontoxic cleaning products, compost, create a wildlife habitat, reduce stormwater runoff, and reduce mail and junk mail. One way to reduce bulk (junk) mail is to make a "do not mail" request to Center for the American Dream, Catalog Choice.org (a member reported success using this), or the Direct Marketing Association (for a \$1 fee).
- 2) Conserve Energy: A key tip to achieve this is to reduce "vampire" electricity use by unplugging appliances. This works because electronics (even cellphone chargers, for example) draw electricity when plugged in but not in use. Plasma TVs draw the most among normal household electronics. A "Kill-a-Watt" meter is available from the Arlington library. Other energy conservation measures are to use a programmable thermostat (to set the temperature lower in winter, higher in summer), purchase renewable energy (e.g., wind power), conduct a home energy audit, or install a solar water heater.
- 3) Reduce Auto Dependence: Steps to achieve this are to purchase products online, minimize emissions choice when you do drive, walk or bike on short trips and errands, set up a carpool for a regular group or meeting, or don't drive to work. Sadly, low ridership on buses can mean they consume more per passenger mile than private cars.
- 4) Shop Responsibly: To do this, ACE suggests residents recycle and reduce or eliminate usage of plastic bags (a major source of litter, and one that harms animals that consume them; currently, only a small percentage of plastic bags are recycled); use reusable shopping bags, coffee mugs, and water bottles (U.S. production of plastic bottles consumes 17 million barrels of oil annually, and plastics continue to pollute long after they are used); purchase products made from recycled materials; choose fair trade and organic products; instead of new items, buy used products; and commit to buying food and other products from local farmers and businesses.
- 5) Green Your Community: This can mean participating in a local conservation project; voicing support for clean energy legislation; organizing a green living discussion group, club, happy hour, or committee; organizing your friends and neighbors to clean up the neighborhood; and greening your place of worship, office, or school. There is an annual award for the greenest neighborhood (won this year by Dominion Hills).

6. After thanking Ms. Hodges, the floor was opened for other business. A member raised the danger of the **intersection at 26th St. and John Marshall Drive**, which has stop signs on John Marshall, but not 26th St. Because John Marshall is broader, some drivers and pedestrians on John Marshall assume it is a four-way stop, or they miss the stop sign, which can be obscured by parked vehicles. The intersection lies at the bottom of a hill for

26th St., so 26th St. drivers tend to be accelerating through the intersection. The danger is significant because some 40 children live within a block. Rob Swennes, Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee (NCAC) representative, responded that the County has set warrants (standards) for use of four-way stops. He suggested getting a record of any accidents. The Civic Association could petition for traffic calming at the intersection. Ideas raised included asking for painted crosswalks and using “safe routes to schools funds.” The point of contact for Arlington County Safe Routes to School is Arlington County Public Affairs Division, 2100 Clarendon Blvd., Suite 310, Arlington, VA 22201; (703) 228-3969; www.civfed.org/schosafe.htm. Another member asked about the possibility of placement of a **sculpture at Westover Library**. The point of contact for this is Angela Adams at (703) 228-3553 or aadams@arlingtonva.us.

7. In closing, members expressed thanks and congratulations to Leeway Overlee and to Rob Swennes in particular for the **completion of the neighborhood conservation project** on the south side of 22nd St. and reconfiguration of the intersection of Powhatan and Potomac Streets at 22nd St. The expanded greenspace has become a safe open spot for children to play. The meeting concluded at approximately 9:30 p.m.

--Submitted by Ladd Connell, Secretary